

THE
JESUIT
AT
CAMBRIDGE.
—
VOL. I.

THE
J E S U I T
AT
C A M B R I D G E.

BY
S I R G E O R G E S T E P H E N.

"But it is not the lye that passeth through the mind, but the lye that
sinketh in it, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt."

BACON'S ESSAYS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

NOVEL-READERS have a natural antipathy to prefaces; and, under this persuasion, I have introduced the usual editorial explanation and apologies in the concluding chapter of the second volume. If I have the good fortune to excite an interest in my readers, sufficient to take them through my narrative, they will not be disinclined to read the few additional pages, in which I have explained the motives that have led me to publish it; but should

the event unfortunately prove otherwise, every line of prefatory remark will only add to the reproach of imposing a useless tax upon their time and patience.

G. S.

COLLINS.

MAY 1, 1847



THE

JESUIT AT CAMBRIDGE.

CHAPTER I.

"To use many circumstances, ere you come to the matter, is wearisome; and to use none at all, is but blunt."—LORD BACON.

"ONE nail more, Stanley, one nail more!"

"One cheer more," never met a more ready response after a public dinner, even when the wine was "getting up fast," as a celebrated toast-master once assured me, when I had repeatedly entreated silence, in vain.

The gimlet was immediately forthcoming, a second long ten-penny speedily fitted into the hole, and as speedily buried itself in the

door-post, under a few knocks of a hammer of very respectable ponderosity.

It was an innocent and interesting occupation, and appropriately timed, about two hours after midnight on the first day of our arrival at Cambridge, as freshmen; we were earth-stopping a disgusting snob of a fellow, who had the impudence to be at once vulgar, sneaking, and reasonably clever, as well as totally unknown to any of our party, except a second-year man, who had good-naturedly asked some half dozen of us freshmen to sup with him the first night we entered college; and, after very properly initiating us with bad wine, and potent brandy, set us on the harmless frolic of imprisoning a hapless wretch, who, for his own sins, and his father's ambition, was condemned to three years' labour, among men with whom neither his habits nor his station in life entitled him to associate on equal terms.

It cannot be denied that it was a most laudable enterprize, and we had prepared ourselves for it, as soon as suggested, with hammer, gimlet, and enormous nails or rather spikes, which were doing the work with such success, that "one more nail" promised an incarceration for life, for anything we should have done towards the culprit's liberation.

Happy would it have proved for him, poor wretch, if it had ; but there are few of his contemporaries that know his subsequent career, and I will not unfold it : it is rare indeed, however, that these misplaced aspirings of petty tradesmen to raise their children above the level of their family, ever terminate in anything but domestic misery and personal disgrace ; unless in the few instances in which first-rate talent endows a man with a natural right to over-leap the magic circle which, in this very aristocratic, though shop-keeping country of ours, birth draws round every home.

Our task was progressing favourably, when it was suddenly interrupted by a circumstance on which none of us had, for a moment, calculated; and which our more experienced host had, no doubt from malice prepense, and by diabolical instigation, carefully concealed from us. I am sorry to remind him of this, (for I am pretty certain of his reading every line) but if he thinks over the matter, he will recollect, not only that he escaped all penalty, but that he carefully remained at the foot of the stair-case at the north end of the cloisters, all the time that we were industriously employed on the attic floor; but freshmen, as well as snobs, are always fair game.

Knock, knock, knock, went the hammer, diligently plied by my arm, then tolerably vigorous, while Harrison held the stair-case lamp, which he had removed for the purpose, and Lawrence, to lose no time, was boring ^{away} at a new hole to make assurance doubly sure

with even "a third nail more." The reverberation of the strokes drowned every other noise, even including the rough, shrill snarling of the kennelled fox within; but there was another fox comfortably housed in a snug kennel on the floor below, of whom we never dreamed: this was no less a personage than the Dean, a very excellent fellow by the way, who luxuriated in every baccalaurean enjoyment except good health and sound sleep; luxuries that are not often perquisites of a college fellowship. It may well be supposed that such orgies as we were celebrating, did not tend to do much in the way of an opiate; on the contrary, they greatly stimulated the wrath of a really good-natured man, and he stole away from his lair on a cold October night, to ascertain the cause of such unwonted revelling.

"Oho, gentlemen! this is your sport, is it?"

But no sooner did he utter the words, than our lamp-bearer, Harrison, with the ready tact

of a London house-breaker, extinguished the light in the most convenient way, by hurling the lamp, well filled with oil 'as it was, at the Reverend Decanal head.* It was 'a bold measure; but all decisive measures must be bold, and success crowned its decision.

The Dean effected a speedy retreat, apprehending probably, that such a liberal supply of trimming might be followed up by prompt ignition, and that we might substitute him for the stair-case lamp, which we had thus perverted from its natural use. We were satisfied, however, with our victory, and retreated also, after the example of many great belligerents during the war, who, after exchanging a shot or two, would march away at double quick time, back to back, with inverted valour. This was, indeed, rather a favourite manœuvre of the French and Portuguese armies, till Beresford took them in hand.

But the next morning, matters assumed a

more formidable shape; the principal damage had undoubtedly been sustained by the lamp, but the *os frõntis* of the Dean was not without marks of honour won in this brilliant, though short affair. "The heads were convened," as we were awfully informed by our respective bed-makers, which, freshman as I was, I thought was the classical term for a broken head.

"Why there was but one man to get his head 'convened' as you call it, Mrs. Freeman; and I don't think that he was half so much hurt as frightened."

But in less than half an hour, I found that a three-headed convention, (and we had no more then residing,) was as bad as a three-headed Cerberus, and anything but a joke for a freshman. Stern admonition, backed by fifty lines of Homer to learn by heart—a capital way of impressing good advice—made us all look very far from the triumphant con-

querors we really were. My own features, in particular, must have looked very blank, for our amiable tutor, now venerable by title, though not by years, and highly deserving all his veneration—I wonder if he remembers the scene?—kindly qualified his rebuke by intimating,

“We might have overlooked it as a first offence, Mr. Stanley, committed in good-natured frolic; but such noise and disturbance at such unseasonable hours, are, indeed, unpardonable!”

I, of course, instantly acquiesced in such a just remark, and innocently replied,

“If that’s all, Sir, I’ll screw him up the next time!”

“Then you will have the goodness, Mr. Stanley, to translate the Homer into Latin hexameter, instead of getting it by heart, and remain in gates till it is done!”

I *was* dumb-founded! I never could make

a Latin verse in my life, except what are appropriately termed "nonsense verses," in which, like most modern poets, I am very successful; but this, which was intended as accumulated punishment, by way of clinching the nail which I had so successfully driven home, proved my escape; for Harrison, who had been captain of a public school, and could of course spin verse like wool, immediately armed himself with a Cowper's translation, converted it into heroic measure in an hour, and, interpolating it with a few false quantities to make it my own, I effected my escape with impunity, while he and Lawrence had not yet crammed a third of their imposition.

Our partnership in suffering, and his good-natured aid, laid the foundation of an affectionate intimacy between Harrison and myself, and Lawrence was not excluded from it. Harrison was acute, clear-headed, and well qualified for mathematical reading; he had too, a warm

and generous heart, not often allied with great mathematical powers: he was born to be loved and admired. Lawrence was of a different stamp: he was by no means destitute of ability, though not turned to the best account; noisy, good-humoured, courteous, but somewhat pedantic of the little knowledge he had acquired; the rest of our "set" were only average men, of whom I have long lost sight, neither, perhaps, to their detriment or my own.

Such were two of the principal pieces with whom I have had since to play the chess of life! a game which all *must* play, though few will condescend to learn its principles. I only propose to favour my readers with "a commencement" as chess-masters term it, of this chequered existence; which, happening to have assumed at its outset a rather peculiar form, may lead them, however young, to the useful discovery that, in whatever sense we play the game, whether figuratively or in

fact, "every move has its motive" among scientific opponents: the tactics may be obscure, or at first sight so obvious and simple as to imply the reverse of skill; but a good player will never assume that the obscurity is impenetrable, or that the simplicity is inartificial; if he act on either hypothesis, he will find himself, as in the well-known Muzio Gambit, vanquished by position when he does not dream of danger, and even retains a large superiority of useless strength.

We have no school for such instruction except the drama, where all is caricatured, or the novel, where extravagance runs wild: an autobiography may want the romance of the one, and the comic fun of the other; yet it may have a truthful foundation of more value than either, to those who wish to learn life as it exists, with a view to play as skilful proficients, rather than as idle, thoughtless amateurs.

It is humiliating, but unfortunately, it is true, that there are dangers against which honest purpose or youthful courage will not suffice to guard us: where even wisdom, unaided by sharp experience, will not afford protection. They are weapons which a generous man disdains, yet true sagacity requires us to learn the use of those arts to which the low cunning of mankind resorts, that we may successfully parry, while we disdain to practise them.

Though relieved, and in some few instances disgraced, by many similar pranks and follies, our terms at Cambridge were not passed in such wanton trifling as I have just described: Harrison and I were reading men, though somewhat after a desultory plan. We soon found ourselves rivals for every prize, and were so frequently bracketed together, that rivalry only served to secure mutual regard.

Lawrence remained our frequent companion,

while he never offered to compete with us in our academical race. We all read together during our first long vacation, and hence our acquaintance assumed a more domesticated tone. This led to mutual invitations, and Lawrence and I spent the month of September at Glen Cottage, the residence of Harrison's family.

I had never before found myself domiciled in any home but my parents', or the schools in which they had placed me; I was now, for the first time, received with the consideration due to man's estate—a dangerous epoch in juvenile life. I was charmed with my reception, and certainly not the less so that Harrison introduced me to his two sisters, as a friend whose uniform equality of career entitled him to the regard of a brother.

I found in Mr. Harrison, his father, a well-informed man of the world: gentlemanly in his deportment, and inclined to be sedate in

manner, almost to austerity, had not long familiarity with society taught him the necessity of unbending. Mrs. Harrison was a lady of foreign extraction; at first I thought her reserved, but on further acquaintance I perceived that it amounted only to that degree of embarrassment which is inseparable from an introduction, at maturity of age, to the habits of a foreign country.

Poets may say what they will of the spring, but for a rural visit, commend me to September and October; not for the sporting, though all young men are sportsmen of course, if they find the opportunity. Mr. Harrison was an excellent shot, and too happy to show us abundance of game; but it is the cheerful aspect of harvest and its busy occupation—the life that animates every field and lane—the gaiety that, mingling with labour, shows fair remuneration and anticipated comfort—the cool and refreshing fragrance of early morning, and perhaps more

than all, the fireside recapitulation of the rambles of the day, and the schemes for the morrow ; these are the incidents of autumnal visits, which give tone to the spirits, and elasticity to the body.

“Are you an antiquarian, Stanley ?” asked the elder Harrison, at breakfast, a week after our arrival.

“As auxiliary to history, I have amused myself occasionally with antiquarian lore. But why do you ask ?”

“The dogs are foot-sore this morning ; we must allow them a day’s rest : I propose that we all take a ride to see the old abbey.”

Every eye beamed a glad assent, for the emphatic word “all” was accompanied by a glance at his daughters, and of course included the whole party. Mrs. Harrison declined joining it, but for the rest of us, it was clear that no shooting, however good, could be put in competition with a gallant ride. Some little diffi-

culty was presented as regarded mounting us, as, though Mr. Harrison was in good circumstances, he did not keep half-a-dozen saddle-horses in his stable ; but he had already provided for this, and in less than half an hour, by the kind help of one or two of the neighbouring farmers, we were all *en route* for St. Mary's Abbey.

Among the other delights of autumn, I omitted one that is of no trifling importance to female equestrians, and sometimes to elderly ones of the other sex : gates are left open, and hence a dull and dusty road may be exchanged for a short cut over fields and meadows ; one never feels so gay in the saddle as when ranging a country regardless of hedge or ditch ; even the horse pricks up his ears, improves his carriage, and seems for a time to fancy himself restored to his native plains.

Our route to the Abbey was thus varied repeatedly, till at length we found ourselves

pounded," to use the sporting phrase, at the end of a long field where we could find no outlet by which the girls could effect their escape, though both of them rode fearlessly and well. But even a woman hates "trying back," so their father, who was riding one of the horses which he had borrowed, resolved on forcing a gap through which the girls might follow. It is a nuisance to be mounted on a borrowed horse; no one but the owner knows what he can or cannot do: a farmer's nag is supposed to be capable of any trick in the way of fencing, and, acting on this hypothesis, Mr. Harrison pushed his horse, not *at* the hedge, but through it, when it fell in the ditch on the landing side, making a considerable gap behind it certainly, but no inconsiderable one on both its knees; on close examination, it was found that the poor animal was blind in one eye, and not too clear-sighted in the other.

This trifling accident led to a result of no

trifling consequence. Mr. Harrison would not hear of our returning with him, but it was, indispensable to lead back his horse. I offered to take it home for him, but he preferred giving the necessary explanation to its owner, in his own person. I could not help remarking inwardly that Lawrence was rather backward in making the same offers of assistance, which young Harrison and myself had pressed, but I little guessed his reason. We proceeded on our ride, and in less than half an hour reached the Abbey.

The ruins of St. Mary's Abbey differ in no respect whatever from all monastic ruins that I ever saw ; that is to say, there is, as a matter of course, a massive square tower of which two sides and a half remain, well robed in moss and ivy and duly loop-holed ; at one angle of the tower there is a projecting turret with winding steps up its centre, the first eleven of which retain sufficient space for a careful foot ; the

next four require the aid of hands ; then there are half-a-dozen tolerably perfect, and there the stair-case ends abruptly.

Then there is, of course, a grassy plot of some hundred feet in length well strewn with half-buried fragments of pillars ; and, at its eastern extremity, three or four broken shafts indicate the remains of a Gothic window, and warrant a reasonable conclusion that you are standing on sacred ground, where loud anthems once shook the lofty walls that have long since crumbled in the dust, and left no trace behind.

After this you wander over broken stones, and craggy, bramble-hidden mounds till you find yourself in the refectory, or the dormitory, or the cellars, the learned know not which ; but sagaciously infer that such places were required, and that sundry huge recesses could serve no purpose but vaults for ale or kitchen furnaces ; some ruins of higher pretensions are rich in dungeons, keeps, and all sorts of horrors ; even

moats and draw-bridges and portcullises are occasionally traceable by an ingenious fancy, and now and then, though rarely, the battlemented gateway, surmounted by heraldic bearings more than half defaced, remains to cheat you with the hope that, when you have passed it, you will find something to repay you for your trouble. Add to this, the sombre shade of a score of antiquated, dismantled oaks, bereft of half their limbs, and a hundred feet or so of mural fragments, too far apart to constitute a wall, but intermingled with dilapidated arches that mark the cloistered walk, and you have a true and faithful picture of any monastic ruin, which a little poetry and a little painting may turn to excellent account.

However this may be, ruins are dangerous places to tread in the company of young ladies. I have tried it once, and shall not venture again; there is such heroic clambering of walls and turrets, such losing of oneself in never-

ending corridors, such scrambling for flowers, and ivy, and moss-clad relics — such surmounting of gates and fences, and above all such a constant and inevitable interchange of hands and arms, that it is one of the most dangerous services on which gallantry can be employed.

The Abbey ruins were very extensive, that is to say, they were scattered over a considerable space of ground ; and, having ridden more than six miles, Cecilia, the eldest girl, complained of a little fatigue ; she seated herself on a stone in the chapel, while her brother and I amused her, *selon les règles*, in speculating on the probable history of the devotees whose remains were reposing under our feet.

“ We have to thank them for the nursery of our literature, certainly ; but was religious seclusion essential to preserve our libraries ? ”

“ Not perhaps to preserve, but to understand them.”

“ Yet the very faith which engendered habits of study, taught them to close to the public eye the book most worthy of study.”

“ Not to close it, but to avoid the perversion of it by the ignorant.”

“ Was the command to ‘ search the Scriptures’ limited to monks and priests?”

“ Yet—though I have heard it questioned by the learned, if your translation, in the imperative, is correct — would the Scriptures have been preserved that we might search them, had it not been for monastic care?”

“ Well, Cecilia, you shall never make a monk of me, nor will you ever persuade me that you ought to be a nun,” and I offered my arm to escort her to the farmer’s house where we had left our horses, while her brother went in search of Agnes and Lawrence, of whom we had lost sight for some time. We waited his return for nearly an hour, when, to our surprise, he came

back alone: he could not find them; the farmer and all his household were absent in the 'harvest-field,' and while we were perplexing ourselves what course to pursue, a labouring man brought our horses to the door, and informed us that our friend had left word that they were riding slowly homewards, and we could overtake them in a mile or two.

We smiled at each other, simultaneously. "There is either confession, or profession going forward, I fear," but I checked myself, for I thought I saw that Cecilia, notwithstanding her smile at the first announcement of their message, felt the matter might possibly prove too serious for a jest. We did *not* overtake them till we had almost reached home, nor, when we did, was any embarrassment perceptible on either side. I could not resist the inclination to sound them a little, in a quiet way.

"Did you meet with any accident, Agnes?"

“ Yes ; I have spoilt my habit ; just see how I have torn it in clambering over the Abbey wall ! ”

“ And that sent you home before us ? ”

“ No : I can’t say that ; but if there is one thing in the world that I hate more than another, it is to sit upon tomb-stones, and philosophize with very steady young gentlemen ! ”

“ Why, my dear Agnes,” observed her sister, “ the last glimpse you allowed us to catch of you, you were sitting on a stone yourself, and Mr. Lawrence not very far from you ! ”

“ Very likely, Cecil, but I am sure that I was not philosophizing ; nor do I think that Mr. Lawrence is a *very* steady young gentleman ! ” and she looked rather archly at him, “ or he would not have been so awkward as to let me tear my habit ! ”

“ Really, Lawrence, this is not a very flattering report of you ! ” But he received my remark

with a smiling self-complacency that imported entire satisfaction with the morning ramble, though he thought it prudent to check our inquiry by observing that we should be late for dinner, and had better canter home.

CHAPTER II.

“Obsta principiis.”

AND thus, between sporting, riding and harvesting, the mornings quickly passed away, while the evenings were devoted to music, in which all the Harrisons were no mean proficient; nor were we, their guests, wholly unable to take a part.

I can even yet recall with lingering recollections of delight, the rich and swelling harmony of the female voices, well sustained by the deep bass of the elder Harrison, and the clear tenor of his son, Cecilia always playing the accompaniment; but I observed in their case, as I

have generally noticed elsewhere, where a good musical taste prevails, that their favorite subjects were of a sacred character : they did not affect to despise the melodies of Mozart and Rossini ; they excelled in the performance of them, but it was in the chaunts and anthems of the cathedral that they were pre-excellent ; yet there was no display—no pedantry of science, and still less any affectation of sanctity ; the heart was in the occupation, and at times I could perceive a silent tear, which would not be repressed, flowing from the powerful excitement of the notes.

I never saw a family more honest in their abandonment to the charms of music, or less anxious to obtrude it on the good-nature of less enthusiastic devotees. I remarked one evening to Cecilia, after a party that had proved somewhat *ennuyant*, that her piano would have greatly relieved it.

“ No,” she replied “ those only love our

THE JESUIT AT CAMBRIDGE.

music who love us ; it is a language that others do not understand, nor can we render it intelligible to them till they *know* us."

But there was no coquetry in the avowal ; it was her simplicity that dictated it as an honest truth ; and I appreciated it as such, without any feeling of self-complacency at the implied recognition of our peculiar intimacy. Indeed, at this time, I was thinking far less of Cecilia than of the visible impression made by her sister upon Lawrence, and which threatened us all with that discomfort which attends the development of feelings too marked to escape suspicion, but too gradual and too restrained, to justify an *éclaircissement*.

Agnes Harrison was scarcely seventeen, and Lawrence, who had entered very late at Cambridge was just of age. Neither her brother nor I had any very accurate knowledge of his circumstances or connexions, nor was he much disposed to be communicative on the subject of

either ; his personal appearance was patrician, but it was impossible not to perceive that it was unsupported by that perfect ease of self-possession, which marks exclusive intercourse with good society : we suspected him to be the son of some wealthy second-class merchant, and a degree of intimacy which he exhibited with the arcana of commerce, warranted the suspicion.

He had never been at any public school, but he had been well instructed, and, in lighter subjects, was well read : his scale of expenditure justified the inference that he had a liberal allowance ; this was the limit of our knowledge of him.

Agnes was pretty, as all young ladies of seventeen, gifted with symmetry of face and figure, invariably are, in the opinion of some six or seven admirers ; but she was more than pretty ; she had expression of feature, and strength of character. In common with her sister, she inherited from her mother the dark

hair and eyes of a southern climate, and which, when grafted on the clear and blooming complexion peculiar to British birth, form that highest class of beauty which only requires expression to render it angelic ; but Agnes was no angel, nor anything of the kind ; angels only smile, whereas Agnes laughed outright, with as hearty a taste for mirth as the laughter-loving goddess herself.

I have mentioned a dull party at the cottage ; (which, by the way, was no cottage at all, but a very roomy and substantial country seat :) our late visit to the ruins came on the carpet, when I gave utterance to some heterodox opinions such as I have just expressed. Agnes was shocked at my heresy.

“ Well, Mr. Stanley, for the credit of your college, I am glad that you are not all of the same opinion.”

“ Who is the exception ?”

“ I say nothing of Cyril—he is bound as a

good brother, to swear by his sisters ; but ask Mr. Lawrence."

" I thought more of the nuns than the Abbey," replied Lawrence, but with an indescribable look of confusion, that shewed he was thinking of anything but nuns at that moment.

" Very true, Mr. Lawrence, and you had the impertinence to introduce " sister Agnes" into your sketch of the ruins !"

It would have been " too bad" a hundred times over, had not the malice been belied by a look which implied that the offence was not unpardonable, while the playful allusion satisfied me, for the moment, that for the present, at least, we were out of a scrape. I hastened to the relief of my friend Lawrence, but unfortunately made matters worse, and restored all the anxiety which that visit to the Abbey had first awakened

" Your sketch of the ruins, Lawrence ! let us see it."

“Pray let us see it!” was echoed by a dozen voices, and though I am convinced that the production of this sketch was the ‘primary object of Agnes, had she been allowed to manage it her own way, she was obviously abashed by this tumultuous cry for the artist’s work. Lawrence looked like a fool, and Agnes blushed *malgré* her disposition to laugh; but neither offered to comply with the reiterated demand for the sketch, nor yet to tender any excuse for non-compliance. Time gained is everything on such occasions, and so Agnes, like every woman, intuitively determined.

“We will play at hide and seek after tea, and the sketch shall be the prize of the finder. Do you agree, Mr. Lawrence?”

Lawrence, somewhat dolefully, acquiesced, quite inexperienced in female resources; but the mystery remained unravelled, for after tea the card-tables engaged the seniors, Cyril Harrison and myself played at chess, and Lawrence was

busily occupied in a triangular *tête-à-tête* with Agnes and Cecilia. When all the party had left, the sketch was produced, by or through whom, remains unknown; it was laid on the drawing-room table by invisible agency, and the portrait of "Sister Agnes" was sufficiently true to show that an original must have submitted to a patient sitting; it disappeared through the like invisible agency, but its transient production obviated suspicion.

Not with me, however, nor with Cecilia: flirtation in the abstract, is, I really believe, the most harmless of all amusements: it springs from vanity, and is sustained by vanity; and ends in nothing, which in Scriptural language, is synonymous with vanity. It is chess-playing with the minor pieces; and after a multitude of eccentric evolutions, terminates in stale-mate, or a drawn game. "My whiskers against your ringlets," a competition in which a hair-dresser's apprentice would be unrivalled, comprises the

whole of an ordinary ball-room flirtation. It may be true that the gamblers for such a stake, risk their all, but what then? "*Le jeu vaut bien les chandelles.*"

Yet flirtation, though harmless in the abstract, is a dangerous amusement under many circumstances. Lawrence and Agnes were both too young to stop short, when discretion whispered "forbear," and too unsophisticated (that odious phrase! but I can think of no other), to flirt, merely for amusement. I was still poring over the matter, now trying to persuade myself that it all meant nothing, and that I was too prudish; and now taking the other side, and lamenting their folly, and the common discredit which the affair might bring upon us all, when Cyril Harrison watched his opportunity, and told me, rather mysteriously, that Cecilia proposed a garden stroll if I was inclined for it.

"With all my heart; where is she?"

“In the filbert-walk.”

“Are you ready?”

“I cannot accompany you. I am copying letters for my father.”

“Where is Lawrence?”

“Gone out with Agnes and my mother.”

And he quitted the room so abruptly, that I was sensible of there being more for me yet to hear from his sister, which, for reasons I could not penetrate, he was unwilling to communicate himself. I joined her immediately, fluttered as well as flattered, if I must needs confess it, by the prospect of a spontaneous confidence which I should never have dared to solicit.

A trivial incident at once recalled me to my self-possession. I offered my arm, and it was decidedly but not unkindly refused. What is there in the rejection of a proffered arm, especially when both hands were buried in a muff, for the evenings were cold, that excites

reaction in the breast? I cannot say, but so decided and unequivocal was the repulse, that, although I had almost from the first day of my introduction, addressed her by her Christian name, my tongue was frozen, and I inquired with chilling formality, "if Miss Harrison had any commands to lay on me?" She stopped abruptly, and looking me steadily in the face, with an expression of mingled surprise and reproach, replied :

"Miss Harrison simply wants to ask you a plain question, which she can do without leaving her fingers to be frost-bitten!"

"Well, Cecilia, forgive my petulance, but I attended your summons with misgiving, and your refusing my support confirmed my apprehensions."

"I fear nothing from *you*, Mr. Stanley, but you lead to my question;—*who* is your friend Lawrence?"

"Really I do not know."

“Not know! then you must pardon me for asking a question yet more pointed;—pray who are *you*, yourself?”

I have somewhere seen an anecdote of the celebrated Abernethy, when he received a call from the yet more celebrated Curran; his illustrious patient began very naturally, to narrate all the symptoms of his complaint. Abernethy, according to custom, checked him abruptly.

“But how can you cure me, if you will not hear my case?”

“Oh! by all means! pray begin, Sir; favour me with your whole story—birth, parentage, and education!” throwing himself back into his chair with self-composed resignation.

Curran commenced accordingly with his autobiography, beginning with his great grandfather, and Abernethy listened to him not only with patience but delight, as a brother in originality, having no previous idea of the name or pretensions of his visitor.

Had I heard this anecdote at the time, it might have served me in good stead ; but I acknowledge that I was at once so confounded and so mortified by Cecilia's question, that I scarcely knew how to answer without resentment, or how to cloak resentment in terms becoming the ear of one who was at once young, lovely, and a lady. When a man is not ready with a prompt answer, the semblance of folly sometimes proves a convenient substitute for wit. With an air of mock humility, I again replied :

“ Really I do not know !”

“ I believe you,” retorted Cecilia, but with a smile that she could not repress. “ I think I know you better than you do yourself, or I should not put this confidence in you,” and then she hesitated, as if at a loss to explain herself.

It cannot be denied that there is something very unpleasant, and savouring of humiliation, in the tone of self-acknowledged superiority,

whether in man or woman, or whatever may be the occasion ; more especially if the imperialist happens to be a fair creature a year or two junior to yourself. In short, notwithstanding her smiles, and they *were* bewitching, I never felt more inclined to yield to downright wrath ; whether it was that she perceived this, or merely wished to prevent my observation of her countenance by retaining me at her side, I cannot say, but she at once appeased my anger by spontaneously taking the arm which she had at first rejected, and continued

“ Yes, Mr. Stanley ; we know you well, both by your family name, and as the generous rival of our distinguished brother, and we have rejoiced to make your acquaintance ; but it is my duty to tell you, what *he* could not hint without risk of offence—what my father—I mean my mother—what neither of them perhaps would—no matter what I mean, but I *must* tell you, that welcome as you are, as

Cyril's friends, this is no place for Mr. Lawrence to remain — you can guess my reason."

An awful pause ensued : I was not yet in love ; indeed I had never thought of it : I had even felt myself within an ace of a quarrel, and not a lover's quarrel by any means : and to be kicked out of doors, though by Cinderella's foot, was anything but agreeable. Such was the immediate prompting of pride ; but Cecilia clearly knew me, as she said, better than I knew myself. She had anticipated my feelings, and was prepared for them.

" You are silent, but I am sure you understand me ?"

" There is no misunderstanding you : must he go immediately ?"

" This very night, were it possible ; certainly to-morrow."

" How can it be managed ? We were to stay another week."

“I leave that to your dexterity.”

“And may I not ask why? Surely there is nothing incompatible or incongruous in such a union,* for it must be to that, that you are pointing.”

“Do not press me on this point. I cannot, may not answer you. Trust me as I have trusted you, and believe that I would never have opened my lips on such a topic but that I feel this not to be the place—if you will forgive me, for either him or you.”

This was decisive at all events, and admitted of no answer except a plain declaration of love, for which I was by no means prepared, even had I been assured that it would be acceptable: but still, from feelings that I cannot pretend to analyze, I rejoined:

“Your words, Cecilia, import a separation for ever; that would be painful even to strangers; can it be essential in our case?”

She hesitated, but only for a second, and

then, with a tone that I could perceive to falter, even in its effort at emphatic decision, answered "Yes."

We said no more during the few minutes which brought us to the door, but on quitting me to change her dress, she pressed my arm as she gave me a parting caution, "Not a word of this, even to Cyril." It was not the pressure, which could scarcely have disturbed a fly, but the look which mingled with the caution, that determined me.

"You are right, Cecilia, this is indeed no place for me for many a year to come."

But it was only to myself I said it. I resolved to quit the house within four and twenty hours, even if I went alone: my thirst for independence had not yet attained the point of matrimony, apart from parental counsel, and I felt that a second look like that would be more than the resolution of nineteen could possibly withstand.

CHAPTER III.

“ — When two pilgrims in a forest stray,
Both may be lost, yet each in his own way.”

COWPER.

ASSUREDLY it was a perplexing task, and I came down to breakfast the following morning, still doubting what course to take, and much inclined to question the necessity of obeying the fair Cecilia's severe and unexplained commands. After our conversation in the garden, the preceding evening, the domestic routine of dinner, tea and music had gone on as usual, and nothing occurred to indicate a change in our relative position; the ladies played and sang, Mr. Harrison accompanied them, Lawrence was obsequiously attentive to

the piano, and Cyril divided his conversation between me and his sister.

There had been no perceptible alteration in any of the party ; unless it was a fancy of mine, that Mrs. Harrison had shewn to me more personal attention than was her habit. I never received a single glance from Cecilia, though I own that I courted it ; while Agnes, who had seen us returning from our *tête-à-tête* in the filbert-walk, more than once rallied me on my newly-acquired taste for nuts, and regretted that St. Mary's ruins had offered no such attraction.

Could it be possible, that one so young and so artless, was already pre-engaged, and amusing herself with heartless coquetry ? Or had any secret information been received to the prejudice of Lawrence ? The first was highly improbable, and had it been the case, surely Cyril, or even Cecilia, would have frankly avowed it. The second supposition was revolting ; the most suspicious hosts will not expel

a long-expected and welcome guest on secret information; besides, Cecilia's motives, though unexplained, avowedly referred to me no less than Lawrence, and I was conscious of no evil, nor even of more than venial folly.

Such had been the reflections of my pillow, and my bewilderment remained when I reached the breakfast-table: nor did it at all tend to diminish it, that I found arrangements had been already made for attending a festive scene that evening—the harvest-home of the great proprietor of the parish. Agnes honestly avowed the pleasure with which she looked forward to these agrarian saturnalia, and Lawrence was bespeaking her hand for the first exclusive dance, after condescension had discharged its duty to the vulgar herd. The prospect of a dance was too tempting, and to ascertain if Cecilia would sanction the temporary frustration of her plans, I requested her to be my partner. Her answer was conclusive:—

"*I* am not going, Mr. Stanley." Which, being interpreted, clearly meant "nor *you* either."

Not being in love, I was inclined to be refractory; but women always know their power whether over boys or men. I never could control my features, and no doubt Cecilia was a good reader of their expression; she followed up her brief answer with a look in which were combined entreaty and reproach and I became instantly submissive.

"Not going, Cecil," exclaimed Agnes, "why you always go!"

"Are you ill, Cecilia?" asked the elder Harrison in a tone of mingled anxiety and surprise.

"'Indisposed' is a convenient word," and Mrs. Harrison, after thus assisting her daughter, judiciously averted further discussion by sending her into the drawing-room to look for the letter of invitation.

Cecilia did not return for some time, and meanwhile the servant brought in the post-bag, which gave a convenient turn to the conversation. I had been at my wit's end to introduce the subject of our departure with a proper excuse for its abruptness. I was not practised in social diplomacy, and it required no small skill in it to make an immediate departure appear "the most natural thing in the world;" but fortune befriended me: there was a letter for myself among the many that were ejected from the post-bag, and more fortunately still, it was superscribed "immediate."

Like many "immediate" letters, it was of no sort of consequence, being nothing but an intimation from one of my sisters that a new supply of shirts and other linen was provided by their joint attention, and awaited my commands. (I must say, in a parenthesis, that sisters are the kindest and dearest of earthly beings). Whatever its intrinsic importance,

this letter served my purpose well. I instantly saw the use to be made of it, and though I had little need that morning to add to the triste solemnity of my face, I assumed all the gravity I could in addressing Mr. Harrison.

"I grieve to say that I must terminate my visit."

"What, Mr. Stanley! you are not going to leave us so soon?"

"Going, and before the ball?" said Agnes.

"No bad news, I hope, Stanley?"

"Oh no, Sir! it is the common story; I am wanted at home before my respected aunt proceeds to Cheltenham, and she goes the day after to-morrow."

"Yes, yes, those respected aunts always want looking after; but a day can make no difference."

"She is not in the doctor's hands, certainly; but it is only a few weeks before I must return to Cambridge, and if I lose this opportunity,

there is no saying where she may be ere another occurs."

Though there was not one syllable of truth in this explanation, and from first to last, it was one of those extempore lies peculiar to the class of improvisatrices known as lady's maids, it served my turn admirably; nor could I avoid observing the decided effect produced by it on every member of the party. Agnes stared at me with a mixed expression of incredulity and contempt. Lawrence eyed me with suspicion and half-suppressed anger. Cyril remained mute, looking earnestly at the newspaper; his mother, somewhat satirically, commended my sense of nepotical duty; but Mr. Harrison, with a keen glance of intelligence that implied, "I see you know what you are about," at once acquiesced, and inquired when he should order the carriage?

Though my own exit was thus secured, I had not in any way moved Lawrence, and I saw

very clearly that I must give him a broad hint, before he would be induced to strike his tent; but I was in for it, and at once replied,

“My portmanteau will be ready in five minutes, but I cannot answer for Lawrence.”

“Lawrence! what, has he too expectations from your aunt?”

“Heaven forbid, Sir! but we came together, and he will hardly allow me to return alone.”

Lawrence looked unutterable things, and could he have followed the impulse of the moment, I believe he would have cut my throat.

“I am happy to say, Stanley, that I have neither aunts nor uncles, and if I had five hundred, and all as rich as Cræsus, they should not tempt me to forego the dance to-night!”

Here was a pretty catastrophe! Agnes could not disguise her satisfaction, but to avoid betraying herself, abruptly left the room. Mr. Harrison looked suddenly grave, while his wife

was at a loss what to make of it, Cyril Harrison remaining intent on the newspaper. Thus there was an awkward pause, but my course was taken past recall, and I accepted the offer of the carriage in half an hour. The words had scarcely passed my lips, when Cecilia returned from her letter-hunt.

“Cyril, will you help me? I have searched in every desk and drawer.”

“Never mind, my dear, matters have taken an unexpected turn.”

But before her mother had finished the sentence, Cecilia and Cyril, prompted, no doubt, by some private signal which I had not noticed, had left the room. Cyril was not long absent; a constrained, uncomfortable feeling pervaded the party; Lawrence had taken up the newspaper, and Mr. Harrison was speculating on the arrival of the coaches at the town to which his carriage was to convey me, while his wife was uttering and reiterating the common-places of

hospitable regret at my leaving them so soon. We were all, I believe, equally surprised at Cyril's unexpected proposal on returning.

"Stanley, you have often invited me; you shall not return alone, if you can give me a bed while your aunt is with you."

"Bravo, Cyril!"

"What do you mean, Cyril?" exclaimed his parents simultaneously; but Lawrence only raised his eyes in utter astonishment.

I cannot describe the relief which this proposal gave me; I at once attributed it to Cecilia, and I thought it imported something more than a mere manœuvre to pique Lawrence into going. I might be wrong, but at all events, if no kind consideration for me prompted the suggestion, it was most agreeable to find that I should have a companion on my journey, and one whose society promised to dispel that melancholy, gloomy mist which always attends a final parting from people not absolutely

odious ; my fortnight's visit had been far too pleasant to enable me to quit Glen Cottage with stoical philosophy, had I been obliged to quit it alone. •

All our arrangements were soon made, but Lawrence still shewed no symptom of preparation ; he was resolved to stay. I felt angry at this pertinacity of purpose, for, under the circumstances, it was scarcely decorous. Seeing that he was determined on his point, I asked him to come to my room to help me in the work of packing : he assented with surly reluctance.

“ Surely, Lawrence, you go with us ? ”

“ I, indeed ! I'll see you hanged first ; it is all a conspiracy against me, because I happen to be a greater favourite.”

“ How can you be such a fool ? it is useless to resist. We must evacuate Flanders.”

“ Evacuate ! where is the enemy ? ”

“ Yourself ; your silly love-sick nonsense has, as you cannot but perceive, excited attention.”

“Who tells you so? I have only been decently civil, which is more than I can say for you, with all your nonsense about aunts and Cheltenham; but who is your author?”

“My own eyes and ears,” for I remembered Cecilia’s injunction, and was cautious not to commit her.

“If you had either eyes or ears, you would not have been in such a confounded hurry to go yourself.”

“Thank you for the implied confession; it enables me to say that you *must* go.”

“I answer once for all, that I won’t go: and now my very sagacious, disinterested monitor, please to give me your reasons.”

“Not if they were as plentiful as blackberries, beyond this, that your stay with any view of gaining Agnes, is as useless as it is improper.”

I could not have given an answer more entirely calculated to defeat my purpose, for

I ~~At~~ once awakened jealousy, and jealousy is indomitable.

“ You have said enough ; no power on earth shall move me till I find out my rival, come what may of it ;” and he left me almost in frenzy.

Partings are, or ought to be, among scenes indescribable ; it is by no means the least of the blessings which we owe to steam, that partings have become so frequent that we get used to them, and can start on an overland journey to India, with almost as little demand on our sensibility, as on an excursion to Richmond. We shake hands, say good morning, and are off, and whether to the end of the town, or the end of the world, only concerns our pockets and our creditors.

Time was, however, when parting was a very different matter. It is rather longer ago than I choose to say ; but I can well recollect when a return to school involved a six months' absence, and a six months' absence involved a week's

preparation ; and what with lumbering coaches, heavy roads, rapacious inns, and extortionate postage, so entirely was the unlucky lad shut out from home for the interminable "half-year," that imprisonment in the nearest jail, if limited to a month, would have been hailed as a preferable alternative.

Dreary and sad was the morning of that day when parting could no longer be deferred, and "Papa" was at length inexorable to the "only one day more !" Then would all the sins and tempers, and squabbles of the vacation flash back upon the mind, and awaken a remorse that well prepared conscience for the parting admonition ; but pride restrained the tear, though it could not check the heavy sigh, till some drop mantling on the mother's cheek, conquered the mock heroism of boyish resolution, and he mingled sobs and tears with hers : then, little wondering sisters, sorrowing for sympathy, they knew not why, would press round, and return again and again for "one more kiss, dear brother," till

papa, with affected impatience, affectionately assumed to terminate the painful scene, reiterated in a sterner tone, "We shall be too late for the coach," and allowing but "one more" convulsive, throbbing embrace to maternal tenderness, hurried the unfortunate alien to his six months' exile.

And such is more or less the tone of every domestic parting, whether in childhood or maturity, if the separation is for long. Offences are remembered, but only to renew the comfort of a sense of reconciliation—kindnesses are recalled, to allow us to indulge in grateful acknowledgment of them; anger, suspicion, jealousy, are forgotten, while the best and purest affections of the heart flow without restraint; and sorrow licences a departure from the cold formalities of etiquette, and substitutes at least a momentary frankness of farewell, for the strict proprieties of drawing-room decorum.

I rather flatter myself that I have exhibited a

capacity for sketching the parting scene at Glen Cottage, and therefore, if I say no more about it, I am entitled to credit for having good reasons for silence; indeed, it was not altogether without heavy drawbacks upon its usual sentiment, for Lawrence's conduct could scarcely be satisfactory to any of the party, not even excepting Agnes. There is only one incident that requires notice. I entered the carriage first, and Cyril followed, and seated himself next to the carriage-door. Cecilia had already bidden us adieu, when, just as the servant was on the point of closing the door, she leaned forward as if to give her brother one more farewell kiss; but, in fact, to say to me, unheard except by Cyril, that I should hear the result in her first letter to him, and whatever it might be, she could never forget my prompt compliance.

There were two strange circumstances in the commencement of our journey; so far was I from being in any way sorrow-struck, that I felt

an inward satisfaction at my departure, abrupt and compulsory as it was. True, I was going home, and the man who can return home without cheerful anticipation, must indeed be most unfortunate in his domestic relations, or have become yet more unfortunately callous by cosmopolitan vagrancy ; but it was not the *desiderium domi* that produced my complacency ; on the contrary, my thoughts scarcely once turned in that direction ; they were still at Glen Cottage, yet not blended with a particle of sentiment or romance.

I was quite heart-whole, and if I reviewed the past fortnight with any special reference to Cecilia, it arose from no incipient love, though vanity was a little tickled by the confidence which she had voluntarily reposed in my generosity and good sense. But my thoughts, nevertheless, were very busy with Glen Cottage, and the more I thought of it, the more I was disposed to believe that my departure was as prudent as it was inevitable.

I had hitherto seen little or nothing of the world ; I mean of that accustomed course of duty, amusement and occupation, that for want of a better phrase, one may call the social cycle : my family belonging to the “ higher orders ” as they are termed, it could not but be that I had enjoyed some few opportunities of appreciating the respectability of life, and of judging how far it was maintained ; but I knew very little of the infinite variety of habits that obtain even among those who are justly deemed respectable : hence, I had noticed some peculiarities in the Harrison family that seemed strange in my eyes, and, in defiance of my regard for them, a regard that might be called affectionate as respected Cyril and his sisters, generated unpleasant distrust.

Nothing could be more orthodox than their deportment and conversation ; the most fastidious taste could have detected nothing to give offence : nothing could be more elegant, without pretension to display, than the household eco-

mony. They lived in a style implying liberal resources, but free from the least symptom of ostentation or parade: elegance equally marked in the daughters, their love for accomplishment and graceful pursuit. I have spoken of their musical skill; their love for painting, for flowers, exhibited the same corrected and cultivated powers, in a degree only inferior; and I especially remarked the exquisite purity and simplicity of their taste in dress; it was invariably rich, chaste, and gracefully put on; but always unornamented and retired.

Yet with all this, there was, about the whole, a mystery. I could scarcely bring myself to the honest conviction that they were really the people they professed to be. It was only twice during my visit that they had any dinner-guests, and when they came, these guests did not appear to be "at home." But one morning call was paid; it was a call of state by the county member, at which I was not present;

the single invitation, so far as I heard of any, was to the party of the same evening that we left. I could not reconcile all this with my preconceived ideas of the *bonhomme* of country life, especially during the shooting season.

Then again, there was something unusual, at least to me, in the exclusion of ordinary subjects of post-prandial conversation : neither politics, nor religion, nor the characters of public men, were introduced ; still, there was no dearth of subjects, and Mr. Harrison handled them all in a masterly style ; affecting sometimes, a deferential respect to our more recent familiarity with classics or science, but speaking, more generally, in the tone of instruction appropriate to his seniority ; while, on topics of public interest, he rarely spoke at all.

My father was no undistinguished member of the lower house, and many of my connexions were in Parliament ; but he never on any occasion alluded to any of them, or even seemed aware of their existence ; but for the

hast casually dropped by Cecilia, I should have doubted if they had ever heard our name.

Another circumstance had been noticed by me: there was not only no family devotion, so far as is implied by any stated and visible forms, but, during the two Sundays that I passed at Glen Cottage, there was no attendance at church, nor did I ever see a bible in the house; this might occur in nineteen families out of twenty, and pass unheeded; but it could hardly escape attention where all things denoted a system not only of refinement, but exemplary decorum.

As I turned these things over in my mind, I began to think that I had effected "an escape," in this sudden termination of my first visit of independence, and found myself in a more lively mood than quite consisted with a final leave-taking of two of the loveliest girls that it had hitherto been my fortune to encounter.

But my vivacity was not at all reciprocated by Cyril Harrison, and this is the other strange circumstance to which I have alluded: for at least a quarter of an hour, our journey passed in silence; I was thinking on the several matters which I have been mentioning, but what he was brooding over I could not divine. My mental soliloquy was ~~probably~~ as unintelligible to him. After I ~~had~~ satisfactorily settled in my own mind, that "all things considered, I was as well out of it," I looked at him, and seeing him in a profound reverie, I left him to himself, and began to hum a favourite duet, (though of late years so unfashionable as to be scarcely known): "Together let us range the fields." He remained torpid.

"Harrison! what the d—l ails you?"

"Nothing; I am very well."

"Then take a part in my duet; you know it better than I do."

"I have no heart for your nonsense; there

is another duet in rehearsal, that sickens me."

"Mere child's play, my dear fellow—child's play and nothing more; nor, if it were, do I see any cause for you to hang yourself."

"Stanley, you must forgive me, I cannot talk on this subject—~~still~~ less, jest upon it. There may be nothing more ~~than~~ child's play in the case, but it is playing with dangerous tools, as you will, some day, know. I cannot explain now. Let us change the subject. Who will be at your house?"

"Who! why, I know no more than you: the governor, I suppose, 'Pa and Ma,' and all the rest of them."

"Including your respected aunt!"

"My aunt! what do you mean?"

"Have you forgotten already, that you are going to see your aunt before she returns to Cheltenham?"

"Well, that is rich; and did not Cecilia let you ~~into~~ into that secret?"

“ Cecilia knows nothing about it, unless you have told her ; she was not in the room when your letter arrived.”

Lies, even when told for the best of purposes, and with the most salutary intention, are very awkward tools. It was apparent that Cyril had been induced by his sister to accompany me upon some half-explanation of the case, and I dared not give the whole, lest I should compromise her : yet, within a few hours, the falsehood of my pretext for leaving Glen Cottage must be apparent, and I felt mortified that my friend should misconstrue me ; nor did it escape me that his first letter to Glen Cottage might betray my well-intentioned artifice. I therefore determined on my course.

“ Harrison, I thought that you and I were puppets pulled by the same wire ; it seems not, and we shall impede each other unless we explain. What led you to your sudden fancy of accompanying me ?”

“Cecilia wished it.”

“Why?”

“Because, if I *must* be frank, she thought it would lead Lawrence away.”

“Which you both agreed was highly desirable.”

“Certainly; but you must not ask the why and wherefore. I cannot explain *that*.”

“I have no wish to hear; but did not Cecilia tell you the real cause of my own sudden exit?”

“No—I knew it, for I heard you read that part of your letter. Cecilia was about to tell me something, but we were much hurried, and I told her that I knew it all already.”

“You knew nothing about it; as she proposed to enlighten you herself, I am breaking no faith when I say that I have no aunt going to Cheltenham, nor to Jericho—nor Kamschatka; but Cecilia voted that Lawrence, (and I too, with all humility be it said,) must make ourselves scarce, and accordingly, you have the

infinite satisfaction of playing custos to me till we arrive at Cambridge."

He made no answer, but he took my hand and pressed it, as if to acknowledge obligation and confidence; we at once understood each other, and felt that we could talk freely, if necessary, but that for the present, the less said the better.

CHAPTER IV

“ ‘Let there be light!’ Creation heard the sound,
And heavenly lustre beamed on all around;
Light brought to view the grandeur of the deep,
Waking its waters from eternal sleep!
Light gave to earth its loveliness of face,
Filling chaotic void with form and grace!
Thus Nature’s charms, were all by light defined,
That light, to woman’s beauty, is—the mind.”

PRIZE POEMS.

THE house of one country gentleman differs but little from that of another, as respects its routine of amusement: Cyril Harrison received similar entertainment to that which I had enjoyed at Glen Cottage, and happily, we had no love scenes to interrupt it. The promised letter from Cecilia arrived a few days after us,

but it gave us no information, except that all had absented themselves from the ball, and Lawrence had left them two days after our departure: no message, no 'postscript,' not a word was addressed specifically ~~to~~ myself, beyond the common courtesy of 'kind remembrance to Mr. Stanley.'

A few weeks saw ~~us~~ again assembled at Cambridge, precisely as we had left it, except that there was more of fraternity of intercourse between Harrison and myself, and some little estrangement, scarcely perceptible in manner, between myself and Lawrence. We avoided, by a sort of tacit consent, all allusion to Glen Cottage and its inmates: in other respects we went on much as usual,—wining and supping with each other; and Cyril Harrison joined our *coterie* as he had done before, but, it was somewhat singular to me, I never met him at Lawrence's rooms, nor Lawrence at his.

Our second year at Cambridge, and our second long vacation passed away without

presenting any change worth mentioning in our relative position ; but it was not without some sensations of a very unpleasant character, which I will not attempt to define, that I found, on my return from Scotland, where Cyril and I had been reading under the same tutor, that Lawrence had again, on express invitation, spent part of his time at Glen Cottage. Cyril mentioned it to me towards the end of the vacation, and mentioned it with tears in his eyes. There was another peculiarity in Lawrence's conduct, on his return from Glen Cottage on this occasion, for which, at the time, none of us could account : he became a fellow-commoner ; — an unusual change under any circumstances, and yet more so where a man does not migrate to another college.

“ And what does Cecilia say to this visit ? ”

“ Do not ask me ! One day you shall know all ; and soon too, for they promise me a visit at Cambridge.”

I felt more and more convinced that either Lawrence was an abandoned scoundrel, and known to be such to Cyril and Cecilia, or that some much-desired alliance had been broken in upon by his unseasonable addresses: yet the latter could scarcely be the true solution, or Agnes's parents would never have given him a second invitation. Cyril too, so far as his own knowledge went, disclaimed all suspicion of Lawrence, though he owned that he liked him not.

My curiosity was greatly excited, and not untinctured, though I scarcely knew why, with something akin to jealousy. I had never regarded Agnes in any light but that of a graceful ornament to the drawing-room. I had all but forgotten her features: towards her sister, my heart had a little inclined, as I have already confessed; but even there, it scarcely amounted to brotherly attachment, and assuredly went no farther. Yet I did feel jealous, and avowed it to Cyril.

For the instant he seemed alarmed, and coloured ; but it was only for the instant.

“I know that your warmth of affection towards me reflects itself on all that belong to me, but be tranquil ; there is a family secret, I admit, and by this time, I suspect that Lawrence has penetrated it. We shall know when he returns to college ; we will both observe him ; it may end well after all.”

After this partial confidence, delicacy forbade my pressing for further explanation till it was volunteered ; but my vigilance was not to be checked or diverted.

Since Lawrence had assumed the fellow-commoner's gown, it was remarked that he never attended chapel, and was scarcely more regular at lecture : yet so far from becoming what was then called, “a gay man,” he secluded himself from all society, excepting those he met at my rooms—where Harrison was always

present—and rarely joined in amusements to which he had been previously partial.

On the commencement of his third year, the intimacy with Harrison, which had been interrupted after our joint visit to Glen Cottage, was renewed, and we met at each other's rooms as usual. I could see that there was more of familiarity, but less of cordiality between them. Lawrence was always coming in, regardless of Harrison's assiduity in reading, and always went away abruptly when a third party appeared. I could perceive that Cyril was bored by this, though he never complained, even to me. I could not assist him: I was too intent on my own work, and had, moreover, shunned the man as far as I could do so without an open breach; and the more carefully, because, if called upon, I could assign no good reason for it.

Thus matters stood when, one morning, Cyril suddenly broke in upon me, and with

an air of mingled sadness and pleasure, exclaimed,

“Away with dynamics!—I expect the whole party within an hour. I ought to have had my letter yesterday.”

“Is Lawrence aware of it?”

“To be sure he is. He has been waiting at the Sun this half-hour.”

It is in vain for me to attempt a reason for it, but so it was. I threw my book to the end of the room, kicked aside the table, tore my gown from its accustomed hook, and in less time than it takes to read it, was ready to go with Cyril. He looked surprised, and paused.

“Stanley, take care! If you are thus excited, what will be thought and said? Not for worlds would I have you in the same strait as Lawrence!”

No doubt I looked as I felt, confusion personified. Cyril’s rebuke at once restored

me to composure, and conveyed to me information more decisive than I had yet received : but a moment's reflection told me that although he guessed the cause of my agitation more accurately than I knew it myself, he had mistaken the party, and therefore I could not have committed myself by any unconscious folly. I was right, and my answer dispelled a suspicion that had probably only originated in my avowed jealousy of Lawrence.

“What, Cyril ! do I understand you correctly, that Lawrence is engaged to Agnes ?”

“I did not say so ; but I am glad to see by your smile that you will survive the shock, even if he is.”

“Then tell me as we go, for we shall be too late to receive them if we do not go instantly, what has caused all your chagrin at this connection ?”

He shook his head, and again remarked :

“It cannot affect you, but you shall know

it soon. I had rather you heard it from Cecilia."

The "Sun" hotel no longer exists ; it was at that time the most extravagant inn in Cambridge—perhaps in England, and consequently, a lounging resort of gay men. Harrison and I reached the gateway just as his father's carriage drove up to the door, and in travelling style of more pretension than the quiet habits of his family had led me to expect.

It is, or it used to be a great event at Cambridge, when two elegant girls arrived, under proper *chaperonage*, to see the lions, and taste the hospitality of some fortunate brother or cousin. Breakfast parties, dinner parties, and supper parties were so abundant, that tables seemed spread in every room, and for every hour of every day ; and infinite was the triumph of the undergraduate who was admitted, at an expense of some eight or ten pounds out of his pocket, to the privilege of

“sharing the ladies.” The excitement rose exactly in proportion as the fair creatures were young and lovely ; if rich and patrician, withal, it stopped little short of frenzy.

Harrison, Lawrence, and myself, were fully aware of this gallant propensity of our cotemporaries, and the two first had their private reasons for resisting it : for my own part, I had no other than a very natural vanity in appearing to monopolize so fair a creature as Cecilia.

It was nearly eighteen months since we had parted, and the interval had not been left unemployed by Nature in rendering her work perfect. There is this difference between the beauty of laughing features, and the higher charm of deep and good expression ; every year tells upon the former after the age of seventeen has brought them to perfection ; but the loveliness of expression is not matured till character is fully formed, and is often more fascinating

at seven-and-twenty than at seventeen. In some sense, indeed, it survives all other charms of person, and retains its power when age has done its work. Cecilia was not yet twenty.

I was about to describe her, but it is impossible. To say that she was tall and graceful amounts to nothing: so is every woman in a lover's eyes, though she may be as short as Tom Thumb, or waddle like a duck. Nor would it mend the matter to talk of chiselled lips, pencilled brows, or Grecian nose: was there ever a girl of twenty that had not pencilled brows, and chiselled lips, and everything of the kind?

I once heard of a man who gave five guineas for a pug-dog, for no other reason than that it enjoyed a nose *retroussé*, like his mistress's! These common-places are all very well, where your charmer puts you on double duty, to act as her poet-laureate as well as lover:—indeed, you can't turn out a decent sonnet without

them ; at least, not more than once a week or so, which is but short allowance ; but there is a class where beauty can only be defined by epithets peculiar to the mind : it would be vain to describe its enviable possessor as tall or short, slender or stout, fair or dark ; nor would you give her sparkling eyes, or pearly teeth, or flowing ringlets, snowy neck, and heaving bosom, with any chance whatever of portraying her with graphic truth : she may boast of all—and be as ugly as sin ; she may want them all—and yet rival, aye, and excel the Medicean Venus.

It is a homely illustration of my meaning, but so true that, *malgré* its vulgarity, I will use it ; it is the only case in which “ a silk purse *can* be made out of a sow’s ear ! ” It is personal beauty independent of material substance, which, by a talisman of its own, converts matter into mind—the animal into the intellectual nature, and realizes the truth of that most perplexing

text in the history of creation, "So God created man in his own image: in the image of ~~God~~ created he him." And, doubtless, in that blessed world to which we all look forward as the scene of re-union with those beloved—lamented beings whose ashes we have followed to their graves—this same loveliness of expressive feature, irradiated with the glow of ethereal purity, will form one of the distinctive traits by which the identity of the incorruptible body, perfect, beautiful, and imperishable, will be recognised and preserved.

CHAPTER V.

*“Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
Testa diu.”*

HORACE.

THE stay of the Harrisons was limited to three days, and we found no difficulty in “sharing” them among ourselves exclusively, for so short a time; but, as a schoolboy’s cake cannot be devoured by himself and his brother alone, but must be divided with his “room,” (that is—for possibly the phrase of my younger days has become obsolete—among the tenants of the same dormitory,) so we were compelled to invite many to partake of our enjoyment.

It was for the last day of their visit that the Harrisons became *my* guests. We had spent the time in the usual way : the Libraries, King's College Chapel, the Senate-House, and the walks, had been exhibited in due form, and I had exhibited myself with infinite complacency, as the esquire-attendant on Cecilia ; to the envy of all who turned back to gaze on her graceful form, or stole a glance in passing, at a countenance in which intelligence vied with symmetrical beauty. Yet even now, as during my visit to Glen Cottage, there was more of vanity than love in my attentions. I felt the attraction of her beauty ; but I was rather piqued than pleased to feel how infinitely more rich, more lively, and more varied her conversation was than my own. In a word, I admired, but I did not love.

I was proud of my apparent intimacy with such a being, and pride of any kind has little affinity with tenderness. Nor, perhaps, was

I less piqued at the utter absence of all confidential tone, though we had parted when last we met, under circumstances that implied not only confidence, but obligation. She never once alluded to those circumstances, and delicacy forbade my introducing the subject.

I was embarrassed by this, and not the less so, that I perceived a great change in her manner towards Lawrence. She no longer appeared to be at all distrustful of his attention to Agnes : on the contrary, she yielded to him, as of course, every opportunity of being at her sister's side ; she never availed herself of his escort, or seated herself near him, not even conversing with him ; but her whole deportment implied that he was the accepted lover, and entitled to all the privileges of the character.

Yet there was inconsistency ; if the engagement was made and acknowledged, it was natural, and even proper to advert to it : her own inter-

course with him ought at least to have assumed a sisterly complexion; but she was cold and distant; she addressed herself to me as familiarly and as kindly as to her brother: she never spoke to Lawrence except in the tone of courtesy mingled with reserve. This singular behaviour embarrassed me greatly, but Cecilia was not a woman from whom explanation could be asked without encouragement, and as to Cyril, he was to all appearance so absorbed in conversation with his parents, that I should have supposed he wished to shun me, had he not so entirely handed over Cecilia to my care.

“Well,” I said to myself, “here is undoubtedly some strange mystery; but it is no affair of mine, and time will solve it all.”

I was very right; Cambridge is no place for mystery. I gave them their farewell dinner at my rooms; it would have been more agreeable to all of us to have been alone, but this was impossible. I was obliged to ask three or four

of our college circle to join us, and among the rest, a man named Farquhar. In those days, men had to keep exercises in the schools, previously to the Senate-House examination; an absurd relic of monastic usage, which of late years has been judiciously abolished, as productive of nothing but bad Latin, and worse logic.

These exercises consisted of what was called "an act" and three "opponencies;" the "act," for the name was colloquially applied to the disputant as well as the exercise, was required to maintain a certain thesis in various subjects, against all opposition, and the opponents showed their ingenuity by pressing, in syllogistic form, the most subtle sophisms they could invent.

Mr. Harrison had been in the schools in the course of the morning, as it chanced that his son had to keep his act that day, and Farquhar, as well as myself, was one of his opponents, and personally well known to us. He had disputed with some cleverness, and Mr. Harrison was so

pleased with his dexterity, that he begged of me to introduce him. Hence invitation was inevitable.

It is impossible to account for it, but there are people to whom one feels a natural antipathy, and such was my case with Farquhar. He did not belong to the same college, and therefore we had never come into collision ; nor was he reputed “ a good man,” so that I felt no apprehensions of being crossed by him in the Senate-House ; but he was talkative, disputatious, and vain ; the modern slang “ bumptious ” expresses it all. His argument had been rather ingenious, and he was highly complimented by the moderator.

Cyril’s thesis in moral philosophy, was Butler’s first chapter on a Future Life, involving of course, the immortality of the soul. “ But,” argued Farquhar, “ immortality implies a previous as well as a subsequent eternity of existence—eternity of existence is incompatible with

progressive movement, for progress implies time; the faculties of the soul are progressive from infancy to manhood—*ergo*, the soul has had no previous eternity of existence, and immortality cannot be predicated of it.”

The sophism was well sustained, and Mr. Harrison was prepossessed in favour of the speaker: so much so, that during most of the evening, his conversation was particularly addressed to him.

I had, by a little manœuvring, contrived to place Cecilia on one side of me at the dinner-table; but our college fashion, at that time at least, was to draw round the fire as soon as dinner was over, and place our wine and dessert on a small table in the centre of the circle, aided by those delightful little sideboards that are fixed on each side of a fire-place in most Cambridge rooms. All my ingenuity failed in retaining Cecilia as my neighbour in the little commotion that attends such change of posi-

tion ; and I was more mortified than I could have conceived possible, when I found that in this re-arrangement of our guests, Farquhar had managed to deposit himself between her and her father, almost opposite to me.

There was a taking plausibility about the man that was detestable, for I knew that he was superficial as well as clever ; to do him justice, his exterior was sufficiently ornamental to secure him a favourable hearing, and he was by no means likely to be restrained by any excess of delicacy in probing the sentiments of those with whom he came in contact. He succeeded in drawing out Mr. Harrison to an extent that not only surprised, but startled me. I did not catch the beginning of their conversation, but my attention was arrested by a question of Farquhar's.

“ Then you would revive our monastic institutions ? ”

“ By no means ; they were not suited to the

temper of our times, but they were based on right principles, and fostered sound learning and religion; the principles might be revived without recurring to customs that are ungrateful because they are obsolete."

"And can you revive the principles without hazarding a recurrence to the customs?"

"Why not? The principles of right or wrong are immutable; a principle, right in itself, only leads to error when perverted by conscience, or carried out by ignorance."

"Seclusion from the world was a monastic principle; can we reconcile it either with Scripture or common sense?"

"It was not a principle, but a practice; the same principle that dictated seclusion to one, might lead another to society."

"Yes, as a temporary discipline; but the seclusion of a devotee was permanent and irrevocable, and intercourse with the world only permissive, as subservient to the temporal

interests of his religion ; can you separate such uniformity of practice from principle ?”

“ Do justice to the principle, at all events, and tell me whether these towers and cloisters with which we are surrounded, and the rich endowments with which they are sustained in vital utility, would have been consecrated by your Protestant faith to the support of piety and learning ?”

“ Perhaps not, for they were built and endowed when superstition was in the ascendant.”

“ Did superstition build the Temple of Jerusalem ?”

Farquhar seemed perplexed for an immediate reply, however erroneous the parallel assumed, and Mr. Harrison continued, with more earnestness than I had ever previously noticed in him,

“ Or can you doubt, that if these colleges were still the domiciles of holy men—self-

secluded if you will—and if the ordinances of your Church were still celebrated as of yore, when the matin and vesper hymns were daily chanted with all the fervour that habitual devotion only can inspire, instead of a form coldly hurried over, merely to secure your rising from bed or wine, with an occasional anthem by half-a-dozen charity boys running from chapel to chapel for the common credit—can you doubt that a restoration so far, of the solemn state of the Roman Church, would more effectually promote the interests of true religion ?”

It fortunately happened that our chapel bell was then ringing, and some of our party were obliged to leave us ; Mr Harrison’s last remark reminded them of the duty, and probably they did not regret the excuse for retreating from a conversation which threatened to be too serious to be agreeable. Nor was I sorry for the interruption ; for there was something in the tone of it that excited in my mind a suspicion which

never had obtruded itself till now, that Mr. Harrison was a Roman Catholic.

I had not failed to observe that he had twice used the pronoun “your” in reference to our Church, in a manner that implied that it was not *his*, and the suspicion pained me, though I could scarcely give a reason for it. Cecilia’s eye met mine while her father was speaking, and I fancied that it was a glance of speculation as to my feelings ; but she withdrew the look too quickly to allow me to assure myself of its meaning.

I was not long left in suspense ; we had scarcely resumed our seats after being thus interrupted, when Farquhar, with a rude familiarity, that with all his plausibility was characteristic of the man, addressed Mr. Harrison with,

“ Do you belong to the Roman Church, Sir ? ”

“ I am not in the habit of public confession, at any rate,” retorted Mr. Harrison with a smile, but at the same time with a decision of

manner that intimated a determination not to be catechized, and the remainder of the evening passed away in common topics.'

To do justice to Cambridge hospitality; a visitor should borrow the gastronomy of a London alderman: a supper was arranged in Lawrence's rooms, and we adjourned there. I was by no means sorry for the change, though it was unexpected; for I longed for an opportunity of saying five words to Cecilia, and I found it in crossing the court: I must own that I was scarcely less assiduous in my attentions than Lawrence, but I had no encouragement to carry them farther than courtesy, nor any particular wish to give them a pointed character; my manner therefore was natural, and hence she admitted me to more familiarity than she would otherwise have allowed; but I entreat all young gentlemen to understand that this sort of demi-fraternal intercourse is very insidious, and the less they indulge in it the better.

I addressed her with earnestness, in a half

whisper, "Do tell me, my dear Cecilia, is your father a Papist?"

"We know no such title."

"Then he is not?"

"I did not say so."

"Now, don't trifle with me, I beseech you."

"You deserve better of me, but—" and before she could finish the sentence, that odious animal, Farquhar joined us, with a grin of self-complacency on his face, for which I could have knocked him down with pleasure.

"Good night, Miss Harrison; but I will not say "good bye," for your father has kindly invited me to Glen Cottage!"

If I could have invoked Heaven's thunder on the man, I believe that I should have done so on this announcement! Even Cecilia's cold and distant "Good night, Sir," and she made no other answer, failed to console me. We were at Lawrence's door when Farquhar left us, and I dropped her arm, cautioning her, no doubt

very petulantly, "Take care of the step, Miss Harrison," and I turned away, seriously intending to cut the party altogether: but there was no deceiving Cecilia; she did indeed know me better than I knew myself, as she had told me eighteen months before.

As I withdrew she turned round, spontaneously resumed my arm, and added, "Your rooms are so warm, they have made me a little faint; a turn round the court will restore me."

I attended her very much like a culprit; I was still angry and yet more ashamed, and to say the truth, I anticipated a lecture: I therefore remained silent; we walked round the court, and strange to say, not a word was uttered on either side; we returned to Lawrence's rooms in less than five minutes, and then, when I could see her heavenly face, there was a sweet smile of archness playing about her lips, which said, far more distinctly

than any words could have done, "Now, be a good boy, and play the fool no more." I could have worshipped her, but there was no time for it, for supper was waiting, and Cambridge suppers are too good to be trifled with.

We parted for the night, and I was still *not* asked to Glen Cottage. "But they are not gone yet," I said to myself, and slept in peace. They were gone, however, by nine the following morning, and I saw them off, and gazed with sorrow after their rapid wheels, for still I remained uninvited to Glen Cottage.

CHAPTER VI.

“ They that ride so, and ride not warily, fall into foul bogs.”

HENRY V.

WHAT might be the thoughts of Cyril, Lawrence, and Farquhar, as we all loitered at the gate of the Sun, and watched their carriage till it disappeared at the bend in Trinity Street, I cannot pretend to say ; but it was not without some surprise that I heard Farquhar ask Lawrence to his rooms, omitting all notice of Harrison and myself, beyond the careless nod with which Cantabs are wont to salute

those whom they cannot cut, and will not own as friends.

“ Well, Cyril, there is no help for it I suppose; but you and I have work enough before us, so let us go too.”

And I took his arm; we returned to college in silence, for I felt that my own heart was disposed to be “full,” and I doubted not that his was not quite at ease: somehow or other we neither of us were inclined to read, nor yet to separate. I lounged in his room for more than two hours, talking over the last few days, and we found a pleasure in the retrospect.

“ That Farquhar is an uncommon ass, though a clever one: what makes him so thick with Lawrence all of a sudden, when Lawrence did not even ask him to supper last night?”

“ I suppose he expects to meet him soon at the Glen.”

“ There again! what can *he* want there?

Lawrence's attraction is clear enough ; I suppose I may say his privilege, now ; but I am puzzled beyond measure to make out Farquhar's, unless he seeks another monkish controversy with the governor."

"Farquhar is a puppy, sick of Cambridge, where he can do nothing—sick of home, where nothing can be done ; to get rid of himself, he would accept an invitation to Siberia, or a passport *ad inferos* : he found out the governor's weak side, and was not the less disposed to tickle him for travelling in a post-chariot and four with Glen Cottage in the distance ! *Patriæ quis exul, se quoque fugit ?*"

"What will he do at your governor's when he gets there?"

"Make love to himself, under the idea that he is doing it to Cecilia !"

"And Cecilia?"

"Oh ! trust her for that : she will turn him inside out, and shew him that he lacks brains,

whereupon he will take himself off in utter amazement at her want of penetration !”

“ *Sic placeat Jovi !* Yet, I confess, Cyril, that I am a little nettled at being shut out from the party. I, at all events, should have been happy there.”

“ No doubt of it, and therefore you were not asked.”

“ I hardly think that ; but why do you say so ?”

“ You must ask Cecilia, for it was *her* doing !”

I started as if stung by a hornet, and for the moment stared at Harrison with a look of wild incredulity, that turned his half smile into gravity and sadness. “ What *do* you mean ?” I exclaimed impetuously.

“ Simply what I said, but I ought not to have said it, and would not, had I foreseen this agitation, though indeed I might have expected it.”

“Cyril, this is no time for further explanations ; indeed, I have none to give—but answer me this question—what reason did Cecilia assign for interposing to ‘prevent me?’”

“A very sufficient one, that a moment’s reflection would have suggested to yourself.”

“What, that I am in love with her I suppose? when I never dreamed of telling her any such impertinence !”

“Nevertheless, it would certainly have been a very good reason, and not so far from the truth perhaps, if I may judge by your present flightiness: but she intimated nothing of the kind.”

“Now, prythee don’t keep me in suspense—what did she say?”

“That it would be a pity to entice you from Cambridge on the eve of your examination.”

“Thank you, Lady fair! but methinks she

might have left the alternative to my own discretion."

"I suspect she never gave you credit for any such valuable quality."

"Thank you too, fair Sir; and I suspect that I stand higher in her good graces than I do in yours."

"I hope not, Stanley, for my heart would bleed for both of you, if it were so." And this was said in a tone of such deep feeling, that I dared not press for an explanation, which I now began to dread. I paced up and down his room for five minutes in silence, which he did not offer to interrupt, and at length resumed,

"This mystery, Cyril—"

"Is unkind, you were going to say: on my honour it is not—but have patience; all shall be explained, and shortly. Cecilia feels, with me, that certain passages when you were with us, do, under present circumstances, require explanation; that it is fairly due to you, and even to

ourselves ; but she made me pledge my word that I would avoid all that might disturb your self-possession at such a crisis of your career, and I will keep faith with her. It ought to gratify you to see that she thus cherishes a sister's anxiety for your success."

I began to think within myself that this "sisterly anxiety" was of all things that which was least gratifying ; but I knew that Cyril Harrison was not a man to be coaxed into confidence, or to withhold it for slight reasons : I also became sensible that in thus evincing jealousy, I had betrayed more than my short acquaintance with his family quite justified, and therefore I contented myself with drily saying, "I am highly flattered, doubtless, yet for all that I should have liked better to have been asked ;" and then, to change the topic, I proposed "a constitutional," that is, a two hours' walk along that interminable piece of gravel monotony which leads to Trumpington.

Must I own the truth ? It was the road by which the Harrisons had returned, and I began, like other ingenious men in similar positions, to speculate on the possibility of tracing the carriage wheels ! That love is sublime, will no more be denied, I presume, than that folly is ridiculous ; but I can say from experience, that far from there being but one step between the two, the gradations are so infinite as to be almost imperceptible. I by no means deny, that they are inseparable companions ; if it were not so, young ladies and gentlemen would live in a constant scene of tragedy from fifteen to thirty, and sometimes longer : but it is a merciful provision of Nature, that in the most amorous drama, there are always comic interludes. We had one presently.

We had extended our walk as far as Shelford, and it was nearly three o'clock before we reached Cambridge on our return to hall, when we heard a gig approaching rapidly, behind us : we

turned to see who was driving at such an unusual pace, and to our surprise, were saluted by Mr. Harrison's servant: he had been sent back from Chesterford for a writing-case which his master had left at the Sun, and with a letter to Cyril, to direct inquiry to be made for it; it contained papers of importance. We hurried after the chaise to the inn, and were met by the servant at the gates, with the strange intelligence that Lawrence and Farquhar had already possessed themselves of the desk, for the purpose of forwarding it to Glen Cottage. Farquhar had found it on returning to the room they had been occupying, to search for one of his gloves.

We proceeded to their rooms, but their doors were sported; we succeeded in finding Farquhar's gyp, and learned from him that he had carried the desk to Sparrow's stables, and he believed the gentlemen were gone out in a tandem. On reaching the stables this turned out to be the

'case ; but where could they have gone ? If they had followed the carriage, the servant must have met them on his return ; yet, what else could they propose in taking the writing-case with them ? There was no help for it but to detain the servant, and wait their arrival with patience.

Hall was over, and I was wining with Harrison, (for by a sort of sympathy which we felt but refrained from expressing, we seemed agreed to spend the day together), when Lawrence entered, covered with mud, and yet more unpleasant evidence of close contact with mother earth unfollowed by renewed vigour, but with such an expression of horror in his face, that we both cried out, " Is Farquhar killed ? "

" No such luck ! Better he had been than break that confounded desk ! "

" Oh ! you have been spilt, desk and all ! It serves you right, for neither of you is fit to drive a donkey ; but did you overtake them ? For that I suppose was your object. "

“Got within a mile of them, if the turnpike-man told us truth, when that infernal gate broke the chaise to pieces.”

“Or you broke the gate to pieces; but it matters not, so long as you sent on the desk.”

“Send it on! a pretty joke, when all the papers were in the same pickle as I am! And now, I want Cyril to tell us what to do:” and with this he produced from his pocket a jumbled mass of letters, opened and unopened, and for the most part as muddy as his coat. I was well disposed to laugh myself into convulsions, but I was checked by the stern gravity assumed by Cyril. “The man was sent back for them,” he observed, “how came you to miss him?”

“I suppose he passed while we were repairing at the next public-house.”

“This is a serious matter,” Cyril proceeded, “you must write to my father a detailed account, and I will write too. I never knew him forgive

'the exposure of his papers, happen how it might : had you broken your necks, perhaps he would have been softened."

"Then say, if you please, that I have broken my head—perhaps that will do as well."

But Cyril's gravity was not to be shaken : he tied up and sealed the papers with great care, and then seated himself to write.

"Were *you* driving, Lawrence?"

"No, Farquhar."

"Then *you* are safe ; but Farquhar must give up Glen Cottage : he must never shew himself there."

I confess that I thought this a severe penalty for unintentional offence, especially when springing from courteous intention ; but Cyril knew his father best, and for my part, I was so pleased at this result, that I troubled myself little about the occasion, though the importance which Cyril Harrison attached to it, seemed to me to partake a little of mystery.

“Are you certain that you collected all, Lawrence?”

“I have no reason to doubt it; but I cannot answer for it in the confusion that followed.”

“Then I must ask Farquhar.”

But while putting on his cap and gown, the culprit entered; he had changed his dress, and bore no marks of the catastrophe, except that his arm was in a sling :

“This is a pretty mess, Farquhar; are these *all* the papers?” shewing the packet.

“I gave all I could find, to Lawrence.”

“Well, our servant shall take them by the coach to-morrow, and I will write the best apology I can for you; but I can tell you that Glen Cottage is the last place in the world for you after an accident like this.”

“Quite the contrary, Harrison. I shall get my exeat to-morrow, and for the rest, kind intentions—restive horse—arm half-broken, and

a hundred and fifty miles to apologise, will make my peace depend on it."

We all stared at him in astonishment, coxcomb as we knew him to be.

"Are you serious?" said Lawrence.

"Quite so."

"Then, by Jove, I go with you."

Harrison exchanged a look with me, which implied that remonstrance was useless trouble, and we resumed our seats, Lawrence and Farquhar going away together. This incident led to such consequences, that trifling as it was, I have given it in detail; they left Cambridge the following day, and never returned. In fact, Lawrence had made up his mind long since not to take his degree, and Farquhar had hesitated about degrading; the injury to his arm, though very trifling, gave him a decent excuse, and he made the most of it.

I need not follow out the college history of Cyril and myself; it presented nothing of

interest, except that, in the January following, we found ourselves, as usual, bracketed in the tripos, not at the head of it certainly, but sufficiently near it to obtain the desiderated *éclat* of "very high men," and we were well satisfied.

CHAPTER VII.

“ Seek not a scorpion’s nest,
Nor set no footing on this unkind shore.”

HENRY VI.

THOSE who have never experienced it can rarely appreciate the exquisite pleasure of feeling that, “at length,” the race is over, and all its training, excitement, and suspense are terminated, and for ever, and the business of the world about to begin in earnest.

It was proverbial in my time, and no doubt it continues to be so, that the first year at Cambridge was delightful—the second, wear-

some—the third, detestable: in fact, a young man has no chance of pleasure there after the first novelty is over, unless he finds it in the excitement of gaiety, or of competition: nothing can well be more *ennuyant* than the dull routine of academic life to those who, if not idle, are yet not systematically industrious; the boat-racing of modern times would form a happy resource, involving as it does, but little expense either of time or money, were it not that the competition has all the wear and tear of excitement, without any ultimate object: the attention is diverted by the all-absorbing interest of the “races” at times when it should be rigorously devoted to reading; nor can it be denied that, after all that can be said for it, to be the best waterman on the Isis or the Cam is but a humble ambition: yet, even this pursuit is a great relief to the monotony of college, and a great improvement on the gambling, sporting, dissipated “gaiety” of

thirty years ago. It would be unobjectionable if pursued with less anxious preparation.

To return from this digression ; neither Cyril nor myself had been idle men ; but yet, when all was over, and we entered the same post-chaise for town, as we passed St. Mary's, and heard its well known chimes bidding us farewell, we could not resist a simultaneous congratulation of each other, though then uncertain of our places.

“ Well, dear Stanley, they may place us where they will ; I have done my best, and thank God, 'tis over.”

“ You cannot be more thankful than I am, Cyril, and yet, to say truth, I would rather have been sure of my honours before I revisit the Glen.”

“ Never fear about your place : you must be high enough for all reasonable ambition ; but let us leave the Senate-House behind us, and consider ‘ what next ? ’ ”

"You will return for your fellowship, I conclude, but I have no such purpose."

"Never mind about that; we must both return to take our degree; but I meant what shall we do meanwhile? We have but a few days, where shall we spend them?"

"Are you not going home, then?"

"Not, if you will take me home with you."

"You could not have made a more agreeable proposal, for even had you asked me to the Glen, I must have taken home *en route*; and, to be frank, I am loth to see Cecilia till I can render a good account of myself."

"You would not have seen her in any event; she is in France."

"In France! And why not have told me this before?"

"For precisely the same reason that you were not invited when they left us—to keep your mind composed."

"But why should that disturb me?"

“Stanley, I told you that the day should come when all should be explained: shall I proceed now?”

Though I had looked forward to this promised explanation with eager anxiety; though, considering our long intimacy, I had often pondered on the half-confidence of my friend with feelings bordering on resentment; and though the object now uppermost in my mind was how to break the matter to my father—for I was conscious that the further prosecution of it, unsanctioned by him, would be dishonourable—I trembled at the approaching *éclaircissement*; I had a strange presentiment that it boded something fatal to the hopes which I now began to indulge. I made no reply, for I feared lest my voice should fail me; and Cyril, perhaps to put an end to an agitation which he saw was rising, abruptly proceeded.

“It is all comprised in a word. I only wonder that, with your quickness, it is still

necessary to mention it—*my* family are Roman Catholics !”

“ Well !—and what then ? I half suspected your father at my dinner-party.”

“ But *you*, Stanley, are a Protestant.”

“ And are not *you* ?”

“ That is between me and my God. My confidence, Stanley, can go no farther ; at least, not now.”

This was, indeed, throwing a ray on my hitherto darkened brain ; but, like the sudden access of light to the long-imprisoned captive, it only served to bewilder me almost to madness. I became restless and impatient. I fumbled about the glass, and broke it. I shouted to the post-boy to drive faster ; changed my position a dozen times ; unlocked my portmanteau as if to search for something, and relocked it without examination ; and then, humming “ *Dulce Domum*,” flung myself back into the corner of the chaise, as if sullenly determined

to say no more ; but Cyril was affection itself, and as judicious as he was kind. He saw what a conflict was passing in my mind, and my utter want of self-command ; he was aware too, for he experienced it himself, that the overstrained efforts of the last week had predisposed me to hysterical weakness ; he knew that for three days past I had scarcely taken food or sleep, and had even dosed myself with brandy for the final struggle, and he rightly inferred that, to find vent for my passion in tears, would subdue its alarming excess. He allowed a few minutes to pass in silence, and then said, pressing my hand,

“Tell me frankly, Stanley, was not Cecilia right when she said that the Glen was no place for *you* ?”

“Then why did she come to Cambridge ?”

“Because my father compelled her. But you shall judge for yourself what have been her feelings,” and he drew from his pocket-book

a letter, and put the envelope in my hands ; it only contained the conclusion of a sentence :—
“ It would be to me a source of endless self-reproach, if one so justly ‘dear to you were disappointed of the honours he well deserves, as one of the sad consequences of our ill-advised visit ; he would himself blame me hereafter, and his censure would be only less painful than the reproof of my own conscience : we have enough to answer for as it is.”

Cyril had rightly calculated : a moment’s pause was followed by a flow of tears, and I became tranquil as I became subdued. He again pressed my hand.

“ I have more—much more to tell you, Stanley, and therefore I wish to accompany you home ; you are not equal to the excitement to-day, nor am I.”

Home—dear home, with all its sweets and seductions, soon made me myself again. There they stood, waiting and watching for my arrival,

hours before steam itself could have conveyed me so far ! and when the carriage became visible on entering the carriage-sweep, away they rushed with uncovered heads, and streaming ringlets, and glowing cheeks, to anticipate, though only by a minute, the gratulatory embrace of paternal and fraternal love. My sisters, no longer infants, but fine, blooming girls, hung suspended from each arm, while my mother threw her arms round us all, and sobbed with joy ; my aged father scarcely spoke, but as he took me by the hand, I could see the tear glisten in his deep-arched eye. Oh ! the labours of half-a-century would have been well repaid by the delight with which I heard his only salutation, " My own dear boy, you have done your duty well."

It is long—long since ! their ashes have long mouldered in the dust, and since that happy meeting, if I have endured sorrow and adversity, I have had my triumphs and my

joys ; but never have I reaped reward so rich,— never have I felt gratification so exquisite and so pure as then : nor till we meet in Heaven shall I feel so blest again ! It is no affectation, no *ruse* to waken feeling ; I have written the last few lines with an emotion I should be ashamed to shew, though I am not ashamed to own it.

But where was Cyril all this time ? I need scarcely say that all the hearty warmth of my reception was richly reflected upon him, and he proved his title to it, for he actually wept from sympathy, as he whispered in my ear, “This, indeed, *is* home !” Poor fellow ! he needed its repose yet more than I : he did not possess either my strength of constitution, or my elasticity of spirits, and it soon became apparent that he required nursing. I was selfish enough to regret this on my own account, for it was impossible for me to unfold my heart to my father as I had designed, until I

received from Cyril the narrative which he had promised, and in the exhausted state in which he found himself, he was quite unequal to the task.

The ensuing week brought us a list of the tripos, and our position in it, far exceeding our most sanguine expectations, and adding yet more to the general satisfaction, restored him almost to his former strength; but the journey was long and trying, and therefore we persuaded him not to return for his degree.

I went back alone, leaving him to the care of his affectionate nurses—for all took a share in the duty. I only remained to go through the necessary forms, and pack up my books: it being a well known and still existing peculiarity of Cambridge—that when a man leaves it, his books are all that remains to him, excepting one change of clothes, three shirts, seven odd stockings, a spare pocket-handkerchief, and four teaspoons. I have heard of an instance of one

sheet having been discovered ; and, in one very extraordinary case, a friend of mine, who was rather careful in such matters, actually saved six towels, being exactly half his set ; but then he had inscribed his name and college at full length in each corner, and thereby acquired the *soubriquet* of “ *Quadratic*.” It has often been a matter of philosophical inquiry what becomes of the table-linen, bed-linen, and other stock in trade of an undergraduate ? But “ *bene decessit*,” is the invariable account of each and every article, and the problem is likely to remain unsolved for ever.

As I was making my last tour of the market-place, to settle an account that I had forgotten, my eye was attracted to a shop window, by a small but highly-finished oil-painting, of miniature size, and set in gold ; it was apparently foreign ; whether it was mere fancy, or that never having much regarded any female features but Cecilia's, I thought that every fine countenance

must resemble hers, I know not. The subject was young, and fancifully treated, as if it had been a study of a Madonna: there was, at all events, likeness enough to swear by, and I bought it for a trifle. The shopman either could not, or would not tell me how he came by it, and seemed to think himself well paid by ten shillings, notwithstanding the costly material of the setting. The more closely I examined it, the more striking the likeness appeared to be; and my first inquiry of Cyril, on reaching home, was if Cecilia had ever had her portrait taken?

“Certainly not. I must have known it, I think, if she had!”

I then shewed him my purchase: he at once recognized the features, and, for the moment, was much annoyed.

“This has been done clandestinely. I must ask her about it.” But woman’s eyes are often sharper than ours in such trifles: I shewed it to my sisters, and one of them, on close scrutiny

detected a date stamped upon the gold, of twenty-five years previously ; this seemed to settle the matter, so I retained my purchase unchallenged, and if with somewhat less romantic fondness for it, still with enough to make me wear it conformably to the strict rules of romance !

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Quis scit, an adjiciant hodiernæ crastina summæ
Tempora Di superi !”

HORACE.

DID my reader ever accustom himself to the shower-bath throughout the year? If he has been given to this very salutary habit, he must at times have experienced an almost invincible repugnance, in a fresh and frosty morning in October, to rising at his usual hour, and, exchanging the genial warmth of bed, and the dreamy, semi-somnolent vagaries of his pillow, floating through fancy like the grey mists of

morning between darkness and light, for the downright, point-blank embrace of a pailful of icy water with his shivering, gasping, denuded carcase !

It is no joke ; there you stand, shaking and irresolute, anticipative of horror, just as when the dentist takes his instrument in hand, and as loth to pull the cord as if the sword of Damocles were suspended by it over your devoted head ; at last, in sheer desperation, the hand is raised, the bolt withdrawn, round whirls the pail, and the bustle of drowning suspends the power of further reflection, till all is over ; when the salubrious glow of every muscle repays your spontaneous suffering by the comfortable assurance that it has not been in vain. Of all forms of ablution, it is at once the most formidable and most complete !

The feelings with which I have dwelt on these college and domestic scenes, are not dissimilar : I have lingered over the recollection of

them, most loth to rouse myself to sterner duty. There is, indeed, a genial warmth about them which sustains a cheerful, yet not excited animation: dreary and misty as the remembrance is, it is the remembrance not of fancy, but of fact;—of actual scenes, where all was real and true, and yet where truth and reality involved no pain, and but little of disgust.

I could doze away hour after hour in futile efforts to recall those days of sunshine, scarcely ever clouded by a deeper shadow than the disappointment of a scheme of pleasure, or momentary defeat by some new and perplexing subject: and yet the efforts are not entirely futile—so indelible are all impressions on the youthful mind.

I could at this moment paint, with Wilkie's accuracy, the interior of my room: the hanging shelves, exulting in their prize-books, and surmounted by a bust of Cicero; the standing-desk, covered with that enviable scribbling-

paper of which no place but Cambridge has yet been known to boast, with scattered sheets of half-solved problems, and half-written declamations ; the prints of Milner, Gretton, Wood, and all the then heads of colleges and caricature, adorning the half-dismantled walls ; the surplice, unwashed for a term, suspended from a hook behind the bed-room door, and when removed for Saints' day's use, exposing a coursing-whip, a pair of plated spurs, and other utilities for the field ; the reading-lamp of the last fashion, when every man who had got up his hydrostatics, invented for himself ; and above all, the little pembroke table that greeted the eyes after morning chapel, snugly drawn to the warmest corner of the fire, from which the kettle hissed a welcome to the well-crustled college loaf, and its satellite attendants—three inches of a yard of Cambridge butter ; while my busy, bustling bed-maker, with an assiduity easy to be accounted for—involving, as it did,

her arrangements for her family dinner, hailed my return from chapel with her habitual question, "Anything from the cook this morning, Sir?"

These were halcyon days! but though delightful while they lasted, and delightful in the retrospect, miserable indeed is the man who thus would vegetate away existence: at twenty-three every man worthy of the name, looks out for sterner occupation. I must bid adieu to college, and plunge into that coldest of all baths—the busy world.

Cyril's state gradually became alarming, and not the less so that it wanted all symptoms of organic affection. Strength failed, and appetite disappeared, without apparent cause: when we asked him of himself, he always answered that he was well, and yet even his voice became feeble, and his features gradually assumed that settled look of distress, which medical men regard with more anxiety than any derangement

of the animal functions. I should have been disposed to predicate insanity, brought on by excess of application, but his mind was clear, and his powers of conversation more lively than ever, though it was with difficulty that we could induce him to join in it: it was, perhaps, still more conclusive against insanity, that his sleep was calm and regular.

Travelling was recommended, and preparations were made; but on the eve of our intended departure, he summoned me to his bed-room, where he spent most of the day, reclining on the sofa, and told me, with many regrets for the trouble he occasioned, that he was utterly unequal to a journey, or he should have felt it his duty to go to Glen Cottage; "Though," he added, with a melancholy smile, "I am much happier here."

"Then here you shall remain, Cyril; but tell me the cause of all this,—for there is a secret cause, I am convinced."

“There is, indeed, Stanley ; but why should I distress *you* with it?—And yet you must know it soon! My dear Stanley,” after a brief pause, “I feel—I know that I am dying !”

For the instant, I was struck with horror ; such a possibility had never once occurred to me, ill as he undoubtedly was ; but for one so young, and till of late so well, and just released from a course of severe but triumphant labour, to begin his career of life with an *éclat* that must lead to honour and success,—I could not regard it as a possible contingency, and I repelled the suggestion as springing from the lassitude caused by unremitted exertion and excitement.

“Nay, Stanley, you have gone through the same course, and with a more excitable temper than mine, and yet I never saw you better, while I am exhausted and attenuated ! That shews my frame to be naturally weaker. I *know* that I am dying !”

“You should check this despondency, Cyril : I have heard it said that it is apt to verify its own predictions, by exhausting the powers that ought to control it. Let us talk of something else.”

“No ; I wished to speak of this. I am sensible that my strength is declining daily—even hourly. I have much to say : to-morrow I may be unable.”

“Cyril, I have shunned these topics, because I saw you were unequal to them, and only for that reason. Let us pass them by till you are stronger.”

“It is not of Cecilia I wish to speak, but of myself. I tried to write it down, but I could not manage it. Surely you will hear me, Stanley?”

I refrained from further opposition ; for though I was far from sharing his apprehensions, it occurred to me that the relief of unburthening his mind, might conduce largely to his

restoration. I seated myself on the sofa beside him, and told him that for this reason alone, I would indulge him, if he would promise to desist when I thought he had said enough.

“I told you that I am happier here than at Glen Cottage,” he began, “and you make me feel that here alone, I can be with comfort during the few weeks or months that I may linger on. Do you recollect asking me whether I was not a Protestant? At that time, I knew not how to answer you. I now avow it, Stanley. Would to God that I had dared avow it years ago!”

“Why surely, Cyril, you always were! Did you not regularly attend chapel, and sign the declaration of conformity?”

“Oh, Stanley! would that I never had!—There is the sting of that remorse which alone makes this hour painful!”

“My dearest friend, what *can* you mean? You are speaking paradoxes!”

“I had a dispensation from the head of that Church to which I then belonged.”

“What! do I understand you, Harrison? A dispensation to practice hypocrisy and falsehood?”

He burst into tears, while I paced the room in emotion not unmingled with indignation; but his tears instantly reminded me that at such a moment my language was inhuman.

“Forgive me, Cyril; my asperity is unwarrantable; it was forced from me by my surprise.”

“Now you again call me ‘Cyril,’ I can forgive anything,” he said, taking my proffered hand with another of his melancholy smiles, “and indeed, Stanley, I have suffered so much reproach of late, that I ought to be accustomed to its tone; but I cannot bear it from your lips; we will not go on now: I have told you, not all, but that which is most painful, and it will therefore be no effort to resume the subject: let

me try if I cannot accomplish half an hour's walk—a 'constitutional' if you will."

But alas ! it was more than he could manage: in less than ten minutes he returned to his sofa, though more composed than I had seen him for some days, and not without some show of cheerfulness. It seemed right to apprise his friends of his languid condition, even if his anticipations were groundless, and I asked him if he had done so ?

"I wrote to my father ; but I have received no answer, and expected none."

"Nor from Cecilia ?—nor Agnes ?—nor your mother ?"

"They know nothing of my illness."

"Why not ?"

"Stanley, you must know *all*, before these things can be made intelligible, and you shall know all to-morrow ; but you were right, I have made as much effort as I am equal to for one day."

My sisters were too young to be admitted to a family cabinet-council ; but I considered it my duty to consult my parents on the propriety of instant communication with Mr. and Mrs. Harrison, and with their approbation I wrote to the former by the same post, confining myself to the simple fact that Cyril was extremely ill, and thought himself in imminent danger ; that we were not without apprehensions, in which his medical attendants concurred. I could not resist certain misgivings as to the success of my letter, and therefore I also forwarded a few lines in a separate cover to Cecilia, taking my chance of her having by this time returned from Paris. As the natural result of these letters would be the speedy arrival of his father, or some of his family, it was prudent to prepare Cyril for their coming, and I availed myself of his temporary rally to mention it the next morning.

“ Thank you, Stanley, it was very considerate of you, but he will never come.”

“ But your mother and sisters will.”

“ They ! They will hear nothing of it.”

“ Are they not at home ?”

“ I believe so, but that will make no difference : they will never hear of it.”

“ To tell you the truth, I wrote a line also to Cecilia.”

He smiled, and shook his head, but said nothing. On the fourth day my answer came ; but such an answer was surely never, under similar circumstances, written by a father's pen !

“ Glen Cottage.

“ My dear Sir,

“ My son's illness does not surprise me ; if it terminates in death, may it also end in penitence ; I have not delivered your letter to my daughter, finding that it related only to the same subject. I gratefully acknowledge your kind attentions ; but you will perceive that the repetition of them is unnecessary.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.”

What was to be done? To show such a letter to Cyril would be to read his death-warrant. We consulted together, and determined on suppressing it altogether; but *my* father was a man made of different clay; though on the verge of seventy, he retained all the energy, and almost all the physical power of youth.

“You must not leave him, my boy; but I will go to Glen Cottage to-night:—meantime, you must extract all you can from Cyril; there is more in this affair than resentment for ordinary faults, and unless I know all, I can do no good.”

I then reported to him all that had already passed; he immediately drew inferences which had not presented themselves to me.

“A dispensation! This would not have been granted except for high purposes; perhaps to plant in our university a Jesuit in disguise! And Cyril, I suppose, would not suit their purpose, and hence the quarrel! I marvel how

many more there may be, and of more pliable material !”

Here was indeed a master key to unlock many a mystery ! • My eyes were opened as if a film had been withdrawn, and opened too, to my own danger. And then, Mr. Harrison’s letter ! A man of the world, of education, and of taste, filling the rank of a gentleman, to open the letter of another, though that other were his daughter !

I scarcely know anything so abhorrent to a well-strung mind, as to violate the seal of a letter addressed to another, or to betray the confidence of one where “private” is superscribed. In all my experience of the world, and it is now considerable, I never knew but one instance of such depraved contempt of the principles of honour which conventionally govern the tone of good society.

It is vain to attempt it : I cannot describe the complicated feelings which oppressed me at

this juncture ; the old enigma returned, what am I to do ? On one point I instantly resolved ; never should my father have to resent any concealment on my part, whatever might be the consequences : he was about to leave the room, to announce to my mother his purpose of going, when I stopped him, with much earnestness, and some confusion, said,

“ I have not told you all.”

“ No, my child ! What more have you to say ? That you too, are a Jesuit in disguise ?”

“ Indeed, no ! But I must confess, that I may not be tempted to become one.”

“ Well, well, no time for confessions now ; tell me when I come back ; I may trust you till then.”

“ I cannot wait so long ; if I do not confess at once, I may falter.”

He had as yet, been smiling at my precipitate anxiety, fancying it was some trifling college debt, or similar delinquency ; but my earnest

tone arrested him at once, and he resumed his seat, somewhat gravely, as expecting my confession; but my wits were gone, though my resolution remained.

“I am—I am sorry to say, but I am—at least, I believe I am—I am *very* sorry to tell you—but—”

“What the devil do you mean, boy? Can’t you speak out? What *are* you, that you wish to say, and are sorry to say, and can’t say? One would almost fancy you were a fool, or in love!” and his gravity relaxed into a smiling laugh.

“That is exactly it; but I could not express it. I am a fool, and in love!”

“Well, and what then? Do you suppose that you are the first fool that ever fell in love? or the first lover that ever became a fool? Go, you blockhead, and ask your mother.” And he was rising a second time, all gravity dispelled; but the ice was broken, and my bashfulness had

vanished, too. I, rather irreverently, intercepted him, and placing myself against the door, added, in a clear but gloomy voice, "I am in love with this Jesuit's daughter."

"True Jesuits, my boy, have no daughters; unless they have a dispensation whenever wanted, but never mind; I understand the whole; say no more about it, only, that I may make no blunders, tell me which of them, for I believe he has two."

"Cecilia—the eldest."

"And does she know it?"

"Not from me; but she has an eagle eye."

"Or a woman's vanity, which will do as well, and see self reflected from a brick wall, though she can see no farther through it than her neighbour; but you are an honest lad, and I wish every father deserved such a son as well as I do;—so go to poor Cyril, and cheer him, if you can. I shall be off in two hours."

I believe the complacency of his warm and

generous heart dictated the somewhat self-complacent terms in which he expressed his wish. In less than two hours he was mounted, the groom following with a small carpet-bag, for a change or two of linen, and a razor, would have sufficed to take him from one end of Europe to the other ; nor was my own self-complacency by any means small. I had relieved my mind of a secret, and he who desires a light heart will burthen it with as few as possible : if my father had expressed no actual assent, yet his words, and still more his manner, implied approbation ; in fact, he knew Cyril, and was *capable of knowing him* ; he no doubt believed that Cyril's sister could not be unworthy of Cyril's friend. I entered his room with more *gaité de cœur* than quite accorded with the scene. He still occupied the sofa, but only as a temporary relief from bed, and I was obliged, by his weakness, to carry him from one to the other.

“ Well, Stanley, so there are, no letters, this afternoon ? ”

“ None that we expected. ” •

“ I expected none ; ” and the sigh with which he said it, belied his words, and marked his disappointment.

“ Cheer up, my dear Cyril ; my father is one of the right sort. He has gone to Glen Cottage, and within an hour he will be inside the mail. ”

“ Your father, Stanley ! and why not you, if anybody ? ”

“ Because I am a dutiful son, and never resist the governor’s high pleasure. ”

I had scarcely uttered the words before I feared that they were ill-chosen, and hastened to prevent their misconstruction.

“ The case is simply this, Cyril. I have told my father all ; yes, *all*—even to Cecilia, and the old gentleman perceived, as by intuition, what it has taken you three years to explain, and me

three weeks to comprehend when you had explained it. My impression is, that he knows more of your father's character than either of us, but what influence he may exert over him is quite another thing. He judiciously resolved that his age and station would give him more influence than I can boast, and I, with equal judgment, came to the conclusion, that I should do you no harm by staying to nurse you, while I might do myself more harm than good, by making your illness an excuse for visiting Glen Cottage. Now you have it all."

"Then you have not heard?"

"Cecilia has not vouchsafed a line."

"Have you heard anything of Lawrence?"

"Not a syllable—have you?"

"He went with Farquhar to the Glen; but I have been unwilling to speak of these matters: he is not there now, I believe."

"Let us turn to another; what will Cecilia say to this frolic of the governor's?"

“Spare me at present, my dear Stanley. I shall perhaps be better to-morrow—can you carry me to bed?”

I did so, and when I felt his feather weight, I could no longer disguise from myself that danger was indeed imminent: for the first time his disposition to sleep had left him, but his inclination to talk seemed to increase. I determined to occupy his sofa, that I might be at hand if he required assistance in the night. He was bent on conversation, and on subjects which shewed that his mind was increasing in activity as his bodily strength declined. I was preparing for rest, when he abruptly asked the question:

“What do you consider the true Church, Stanley?”

“The Church of Christ.”

“That is evading my question. Who are the Church of Christ?”

“All who believe in his great atonement, and

testify their faith by obedience to his commands."

"Your answer is truly Catholic, but it involves much question as to the character of that faith which must thus be testified?"

"I said, 'belief in his atonement:'—a full and certain assurance that the sins, of which all of us are conscious, demand a sacrifice that shall be sufficient to reconcile us to a God of justice as well as mercy, and that this sacrifice was found in Jesus Christ."

"And you said, 'obedience to his commands.' Does not that imply obedience to his delegated authority?"

"Undoubtedly, if you can prove the delegation."

"And where can you prove it, if not in the Church of Rome?"

✍ We need not go so far: common sense will tell us, even apart from conscience, which speaks in sharper language—that the tree is known by its fruits: whether those fruits are

good or bad, the test is easily found in the Bible."

"Then the Bible is the criterion by which we are to judge of the orthodoxy, or to use my former phrase, the delegation of those who expound it?"

"Unquestionably."

"But the Bible itself often requires explanation."

"Never, in that which is essential to salvation."

"I can quote a hundred texts on which our divines have laboured in vain."

"Granted; and yet a critical understanding of even one of them, is not essential to salvation!"

"And have all the wisdom of synods, and all the learning of councils been expended on useless speculation on their meaning?"

"Yes; unless you can prove to me that the plough-boy and the apprentice are out of the pale of salvation."

“ Why ?”

“ Simply because neither apprentice nor plough-boy can comprehend the wisdom of synods, nor the learning of councils.”

He said no more, and our colloquy terminated for the night; it pained me to think that his mind was still wavering between conviction of conscience, and the impulse of early education; but I was deceived: he was testing my convictions, not his own, though I little imagined, at the moment, which way his thoughts were tending. When he continued silent, I went to sleep and dreamed, not of controversy, but of Cecilia! I never enjoyed the blessing of sound sleep: at times I have imagined that the vigilant spirit of a dog has possessed me, and that I am but a canine transmigration. Cyril awakened me at an early hour, with a remark that proved he had not even slumbered, and which my own slumbers were not deep enough to misapprehend.

“ Cecilia thinks as you do !”

“ And so do you,” I instantly responded ;
“ but no more of this at present. How have you slept ?”

“ Not at all ; I have been thinking over it ever since—‘ by their fruits ye shall know them ;’ and if I had doubted it before, I can doubt no longer that ‘ a dispensation’ to play the hypocrite can argue no holy influence.”

On that, and for two or three consecutive days, Cyril was so restored to animation and cheerfulness, that we began to hope we had taken a false alarm : on the fifth day after my father’s departure for Glen Cottage, we saw a carriage approaching the house, with feelings of satisfaction difficult to express, for we were assured that it contained my father, and, as we fervently hoped, not unaccompanied. We were all at the door to receive him, and our expected guests : poor Cyril, who was too feeble to quit the sofa, had persuaded me that

he could leave his room, and I carried him into the drawing-room, that he might be one of the first to hear the family voice, and there he lay, anxiously expecting the heart-remembered tone.

Never—never shall I forget the bitterness of that moment, when my father alighted from the chaise, all alone! Before he spoke, I watched his expressive countenance: sorrow, anger, indignation, were all blended there, and yet tenderness prevailed. He kissed my mother, and kissed my sisters, and grasped my hand, but uttered not a word. He entered the hall in silence, and only then asked, “How is Cyril?”

We were awe-struck; my mother replied, “He is down stairs—in the drawing-room,” when my father rushed in, as if to find his son—his only son, and embracing him, burst into tears. It is somewhere said—I cannot recall the passage—that the tears of manhood

are terrific. It is true, whoever may ~~be~~ the author. "Man never weeps, except from the bitterness of remorse, or the hopeless^{ness} of despair," and either is indeed •terrific.

Cyril asked no question ; he understood all without enquiry ; he did not even shed a tear, or betray anxiety for a moment ; of all our party, he alone was not disconcerted. Calm and self-possessed, not a word escaped him, except to soothe my mother, and again and again to thank my father ; and, with composure that no philosophy could command, he asked my sisters to cheer us with a duct. That morning, at his own request, he had received the sacrament.

"Why," he had said, "postpone it to the last, and take it as an automaton ? I can *feel* it now : I may not to-morrow."

The girls, sorrowing they knew ~~not~~ why, began an air which he had often asked for, ~~and~~ before that air was finished,—my beloved Cyril was no more !

CHAPTER IX.

“ C’est un cœur déchiré qui gémit, et qui trop plein de sa douleur, ne demande qu’à l’épancher.”

MARMONTEL.

I HAVE struggled hard with feeling to retrace these events with accuracy. Every line has ripped open a wound which I thought had been for ever healed: it is vain to sneer at three years' friendship, or to ridicule for romance the affinities of adolescence. Deny it as you will, laugh at the fancy as the wildest of human extravagancies, jest and quip at boyish folly and green attachments, I maintain it still, that

next to the ties of the conjugal and parental relations, there are none so dear—so permanently cherished—so bitterly deplored, as those which unite the generous rivals at school and college.

I, like others, have had my “friends” in after life,—and good friends too, in worldly acceptation: men who would carry a message, and stand by to see you shot like a woodcock; men who would climb the back-stairs, and solicit for you a government appointment, rather than repay a hundred pounds; men who will say civil things in public, and privately laugh at you for believing them; men who will cog and cozen to your face, and say behind your back what they dare not insinuate in your presence. I have tried and know them all, and give to such friendship all the credit it deserves; but for real friendship commend me to the man who has grown up with you to manhood; who has shared with you the con-

flicts, the sorrows, and the joys of all your teens; who has disputed with you every step in juvenile honour and distinction; who has beaten you without triumph, and succumbed without mortification; who has exulted in your honours, and called on you to exult in his own; who, in a word, has progressed with you, *pari passu*, through all the passages of early life, whether of success or of disappointment—whether of sorrow or of joy—whether of love or of hatred, and feels himself identified with your defeat no less than with your hopes.

And such had been Cyril Harrison to me! We had alternated first and second throughout our college career; we had aided each other to defeat each other; we had shared pleasure, and divided disappointment; we had acquired honour, and mutually reflected honour; we were coeval in age, as we were co-equal in attainment. The loss of such an “alter ego” can never

be replaced, were human life again ~~extended~~ to antediluvian duration.

It is painful, and not in good taste, to describe in detail the household derangements consequent upon death. I pass them by, but not altogether, for incidents occurred that must not be suppressed. Agitated as my father was on his first arrival, the scene that had immediately followed recalled him to himself. I could not assist him; my spirits were gone: he directed, superintended, and transacted everything—my utmost powers could do no more than order my mourning; in fact, parental anxiety soon began to fix itself on me, and, though conscious there was no cause for it, such was its soothing tendency, that I yielded to it rather than resist: there is no balm for grief equal to natural affection.

We were assembled, still sad and sorrowful, in the drawing-room, just as evening drew in, when the noise of carriage wheels, the second

day after Cyril's death, startled us. My father violently rang the bell. "Whoever it is, deny them," but the order had scarcely been given, when a scream of agony announced that maternal affection would never be denied. There was no need of introduction—no pause for ceremony—no interval of explanation. The first words had been "how is he?" the answer, "he is gone!" My father—my mother—all of us rushed out, and found the wretched parent, not swooning, not hysterical—but standing erect, mute and immovable as a marble statue! Sensibility and sense had vanished with the first cry of agony that had summoned us.

There she stood, utterly unconscious! My sweet mother, already dressed in deep mourning, went up to her, and, putting an arm round her neck, kissed her. My young sisters, more shy, and yet irresistibly impelled by feeling, each took a hand and kissed it through their tears. I, too, was approaching, but my father motioned me back, whispering, "We must try a stronger

medicine," and at once putting her arm within his, led her to the chamber of death.

When I saw his purpose, I trembled for the issue: but I was wrong; he knew human nature better than I did. She accompanied him mechanically, and entered the room without visible change; but once there, once within sight of his cold and placid face, oh! who shall describe it? It is no fable—it is no romance—I disclaim the author and the novelist. I saw it myself; there are living witnesses to the fact; my own eyes for once beheld the horror of a mother's grief, and had they not beheld it, I dare not have believed or mentioned it. With preternatural strength, she flung herself on the bed—she drew the rigid body from its place—she encircled it with her arms—she reclined the stiffened neck upon her shoulder, and wept upon it a mother's tears! but I must drop the curtain; such scenes are too sacred even for anonymous description.

My father's experiment had been a bold one,

but succeeded: after a short ten minutes, Mrs. Harrison allowed herself to hear his voice, and was persuaded to quit the room.

We had been so entirely absorbed by the sad interest of the event, and my father's anxiety had shifted so naturally from poor Cyril to myself, that it seemed tacitly agreed between us to defer all explanations till after the funeral. I could not even discover, from the manner of either of them, whether Mrs. Harrison and he had met each other at Glen Cottage.

Cyril had requested me, only a few days before his death, to examine his desk as soon as he was gone, and exercise my discretion as to burning all, or any of his papers. Thinking that they might express some wishes about his funeral, I set about this melancholy duty the day after his mother's arrival. I found nothing in the way of direction or suggestion, beyond the "hope" indorsed by himself on one of the letters from his father, that "he should be

allowed to rest among those who loved him most." We interpreted this, though somewhat ambiguous, to intimate a desire to be interred in our family vault; at all events, it justified our urging it on his mother, whose first wish had been to remove him home. She gave way, with little resistance; but yielding less from respect to his assumed desire, than for a reason which to us was almost revolting, and scarcely reconcilable with the passionate grief she had displayed.

"Yes, I feel it is right; he chose to live with heretics, and his remains ought to rest in their sepulchre."

I could not restrain myself, though my father regarded me, almost for the first time in his life, with an angry brow. "Say not so, my dear Mrs. Harrison—say not so; he lived and he died a Christian!"

It was the first time that I had addressed her since she had entered the house the evening

before: she had scarcely seemed aware of my being in it; perhaps she was wholly unconscious of it. She raised her eyes, looking at me with surprise, and the bigot instantly yielded to the mother—she rose from her chair, and kissed me passionately, “Oh! could I be assured of *that*? Could I feel certain of *that*—I would grieve no more!”

Never is the heart so fit to receive lessons in religion, as when softened by legitimate sorrow. During the few days which intervened before the funeral, so soothing and so successful had been the consolatory remarks, briefly and casually, and therefore judiciously thrown in by my parents, and especially my father, that, to our astonishment, Mrs. Harrison actually proposed being present at the last rites, and proposed it with a calmness and self-possession that induced my father to assent immediately; it was a trying scene, but she sustained it calmly, nor did her fortitude give way again

except for a single moment. She begged to speak alone with me for five minutes, and I shewed her into a little room that had by prescription obtained the title of my study.

“My dear Henry,”—it was the first time that she ever so addressed me; “Cyril left some papers; will you allow me to examine them?”

I thought her title to them was at least as good as mine; but still it was right to mention the discretion which he had left me to destroy them.

“Had you been one of our family, which he well knew you never can be, he would have reposed this discretion wisely; but, circumstanced as he was, poor fellow, he had no choice.”

There was something in this reply, that, while it flattered my vanity, grated sorely on my heart; yet I felt the justice of her remark, that “he had no choice,” and I did not hesitate to produce his desk. The sight of it overcame her: and what heart, not to mention a mother’s,

can withstand the shock given by the sight of objects which have been intimately associated with the daily occupations of one whom we have fondly loved, and have just lost for ever? The bonnet and the cloak still remaining on the chair where they were thrown after the last morning walk—the work-box unclosed, and all its little furniture, scissors, thimbles, pincushions, deranged and scattered, as if in mute expectation of return to the accustomed task—the well-tuned harp standing as it was left, close to the piano where open music books revive the dying notes now exchanged for those of Heaven—the dried-up palette and the imperfect sketch, bearing the last touches of a pencil that never before deserted work without perfecting it—the trinkets, shawls, and ornaments, so lately worn to charm the eye of him who gave them—still lying here and there as they were carelessly left by the hand whose dying pressure we still retain! The first and kindest act of charity,

in the house of mourning is, speedily to remove all these distressing memorials.

When his mother's eye first glanced at Cyril's desk, open as he left it, for, I had intermeddled with nothing but the letter I have mentioned, and which he had, perhaps purposely, deposited at the top of all its contents, a violent, hysterical sigh, shewed the struggle that was going on within: his pens, his seal, a half-worn pencil, and a broken knife—half-a-dozen blotted problem papers, and more than one unfinished letter, recalled vividly to mind, the living soul that used them: it was more than I could bear, and I turned away to weep. I cannot explain it; but it is singular that there are cases, and many too, in which female strength of mind puts to shame the boasted fortitude of men.

Mrs. Harrison left her chair, came to the window to which I had retreated to conceal my emotion from her, and kissing my forehead, as

I sustained it with my hand, said to me, “ *You need not grieve, dearest Henry ; had he died in the faith of his fathers, I should not grieve, nor shed another tear :—he died in yours, let that reflection comfort you.*” All was in a moment forgotten : I returned her maternal salute with unrepressed affection, and we resumed our places at the table.

“ I must impose a serious tax upon your confidence, Henry. Will you trust me ? ”

“ Cheerfully and entirely.”

“ Before you know what I am going to ask ! That is more generous than wise ; but I am sure you will not repent it when I give my reasons for requesting you to place this desk, and all it contains, in my hands, and without examination.”

This was indeed a large demand ! It will be remembered that to this hour I had never received that full explanation which Cyril had repeatedly promised, and which I was sure

involved something closely connected with his sisters. I was even ignorant of all that had followed the late visit of Lawrence and Farquhar to Glen Cottage; but he had given me reason to suppose that I should find among his papers some that would enable me to unravel all that had seemed mysterious: it would be mortifying indeed, to lose this, my only remaining chance of information, and therefore, though I thought that I never saw so strongly before, the great likeness between Mrs. Harrison and Cecilia, I hesitated; but an immediate answer was necessary, and, to gain time, I inquired what were the reasons to which she alluded.

“When that unfortunate accident happened to the desk, all Mr. Harrison’s papers were *not* restored: we know that Cyril saw one, and we suspect that he retained another; were that other to fall into any unfriendly hands, it would be a most serious evil.”

I felt my cheeks glow with indignation.

"Cyril was incapable of anything dishonourable!" I exclaimed, "I will pledge my life that there is not a paper here except his own!"

"Then you can safely redeem your pledge by confiding them, unexamined, to me; but, Henry, believe me," and her tears flowed fast, while her words were almost stifled in spasmodic sobbing, "I did not seek this cruel task—'tis forced upon me: on no other terms could I obtain permission to come here. Mr. Harrison's fears alone induced him to suggest it. I dared not even ask it: Cyril was honour itself, in all things but one—had he not apostatized from his Church! Oh, my God!—my God! forgive him!" and she swooned away, after a terrific shriek that brought my parents instantly to my assistance.

My father's keen eye at once detected the nature of the scene without a word from me; he merely told me to shut up the desk, and bring it to his library, while we left Mrs. Har-

rison to my mother's care. I briefly informed him of what had passed, and asked his advice.

"Give it to her by all means, just as it is, and trust to me, my dear boy, for the rest. I know more of these people than you do."

She left us the following morning, nor would she accept my escort to her home, though, a little to my surprise, my father offered it for me : perhaps he thought, under existing circumstances, that I might have hesitated at such a step, or that, unsanctioned by him, Mrs. Harrison would have declined it. She did decline it, even on his proposal ; but not without adding to her thanks, looking particularly at me :

"We shall meet again I hope—I am sure we shall."

CHAPTER X.

“Come, come, you are a fool, and turned into the extremity of love.”

AS YOU LIKE IT.

I NOW felt myself in a position of whimsical absurdity, if it had not been too painful to allow a sense of the ludicrous to prevail. First I was in love—desperately in love, with Cecilia, and she had discovered it without giving me the trouble of ever opening my lips! My father knew it and approved;—my mother knew it and was delighted;—Mrs. Harrison clearly suspected it, and was as clearly, maternally in love with me: but regarded the alliance as a

thing impossible. Mr. Harrison's inhuman letter admitted of no solution but that he, too, understood me, and repudiated the connexion *in toto*. My lost friend had known and cherished it, while he warned me of its danger ; and Cecilia herself, while she had used the power which my attachment gave her, had deprecated my passion as the destruction of my peace, and the ruin of my prospects.

We all appeared at cross purposes together ; nor was it by any means the least singular part of the story, that no course presented itself by which we might arrive at an *éclaircissement*. I could not go to Glen Cottage, for, after his letter, it was less than doubtful whether Mr. Harrison would shut his door in my face : his wife had virtually done so in declining my attendance on her home. I could not write to Cecilia, when one letter had been already intercepted, nor had I any conclusive reason to believe that she received my attentions with pleasure. That

and smiling look on entering Lawrence's rooms, was certainly food for love, if such a *pabulum* ever existed ; but the most timid lover cannot live upon a single look for ever, and it was now nearly four months since she bestowed it.

"What in the name wonder *can* I do?" did I ask myself again and again ; "I'll ask Cecilia herself," I answered, drawing out her fancied portrait, and gazing on it with ardour ; and as I gazed, I thought she echoed my words, "Ask Cecilia herself." "And so I will, by all that's—" when a sharp tap at my door, peculiar to himself, announced my father's approach, and restored Cecilia to my breast-pocket, and myself to my senses.

"Harry, my boy, I have hit on a plan that will do you good,—and you need it."

"What may it be?"

"Write by this post to Lawrence, and invite him here."

“Lawrence ! I don’t even know his address ; and I am sure he won’t come.”

“I am not so sure of that ; there is no harm in asking.”

“It is very kind of you. I think I can guess your motive ; but he and Farquhar are inseparable of late, and I fear that one won’t come without the other.”

“So much the better. I heard something of Farquhar’s name at Glen Cottage : we will have them both.”

“You little dream of the nuisance you will find him ; but if you wish it, I will write to Lawrence. I must take the chance of directing my letter to his father’s.”

“That will do—depend on it. But you must not stay moping in your study here : we will have a ride together.”

We were soon mounted. For the first mile we sauntered along without exchanging a word, when my father asked me, somewhat abruptly :

“Do you want to hear nothing of my visit to the Glen?”

“It has not been a time to ask questions, but I have wished it much.”

“No doubt you do: yet there is very little to report. I saw no human being but Harrison, and the servant that admitted me.”

“What!—had you not seen Mrs. Harrison before she came?”

• “No. I asked for her—she ‘was not at home:’ all which I knew to be a courteous lie, for, as the chaise neared the house, I saw three ladies enter it, and the shawl of one of them lay on the floor of the hall as I crossed it. Harrison himself would not have been ‘at home,’ I fancy, had I been fool enough to send in my card. I rather think that I must have disturbed him at confession, for I met a priest coming away, as I entered, rather abruptly, into the library.”

“How did he receive you?”

“With smiles and blandishments: ‘This is an unexpected pleasure, Sir.’ ‘No pleasure at all,’ I answered, with more truth than politeness. ‘I have intruded, Sir, ‘because I fear you are not aware of the serious danger of your son: and I feel no pleasure, I assure you, in conveying such intelligence.’ ”

“Did he appear shocked?”

“Not in the least degree: had I spoken of a donkey’s foal, he could not have been more cool. ‘Yes, Sir,’ he replied, ‘I have had a letter from your son on the same subject.’ ‘I know it, Sir; and I have seen your answer. I am sure, from my own feelings as a father, that you wrote that answer under false impressions, and in that conviction I have come myself.’ ”

“Did not this soften him?”

“Judge for yourself. His answer was: ‘You are too good, Sir, to take so much trouble, and at your age, too, to enlighten me.’

Now you know, Harry, though not ashamed of being old, if there is one thing that I hate more than another, it is being taunted with ~~age~~, when I am, thank God, exempt from most of its infirmities."

And assuredly, nobody who had seen my venerable parent, at that moment, put his horse at a wide brook and clear it in the stride, rather than be at the trouble to turn into the centre of the road and avail himself of the bridge, would have challenged him with the infirmities of age: though, I believe, he would have been less venturous, had not the opportunity tallied so nicely with the remark.

"But what answer did you make?"

"Only four words—'Your son is dying!'"

"And he remained unmoved?"

"No; I will not say that exactly: not quite unmoved; but not moved the right way. He was touched though—a little touched. I saw him fumbling for his handkerchief, but he

recovered before he found it, and with some abatement of his suavity, sternly answered, 'My son is an apostate, Sir:—he *may* die.'

"Harry, I thought of you, and I could ~~have~~ murdered him. Thank God! I did not strike him. My surprise turned me dumb—it allowed me time to cool; but I could not entirely suppress my scorn: 'Your wife, Sir,' I said, 'may be something less stoical:—can I see her?' 'She is not at home.' 'Your daughters, are not they at home?' 'They are not, Sir.' 'Poor Cyril! I will go back to you at once, and be your father, too!' And when he heard me utter this mournful soliloquy, he did melt for the moment, but, in a moment, the tenderness was gone. He again, however, became more courteous than even at first, and ordered in some refreshment while the carriage was getting ready."

"Did he again allude to Cyril?"

"I can scarcely say; for his remarks were a

little incoherent. I am sure that there was conflict within. It must have been so."

"You told me that you had heard Farquhar's name. How was that introduced?"

"I spoke of Cambridge, to work on his pride. I congratulated myself on your equality of place with Cyril. 'Your son,' he replied, 'is worthy of his honours; but we have had a Cambridge puppy here, and he sickens me.' 'A friend of Harry, or a friend of Cyril, may be a puppy, but he must be an accomplished one.' 'I have not the honour of knowing many of their friends, Sir, but this youth's name was Farquhar.' I only stayed to take a glass of wine, and he bowed me out as soon as the chaise was announced."

It seemed that my father was no further advanced than myself, either in the good graces of Harrison, or the family secrets; but the portrait he had given of the man disquieted me. That such an incarnate fiend should be blessed

with children at all, appeared an eccentric frolic of Nature ; but that Cecilia should be subject to his thralldom only stimulated my desire to make her my own. A lover will return to his point even in a *tête-à-tête* with his governor.

“ And you heard nothing of Cecilia ? ”

“ I did not say so. Nothing from *him*, certainly.”

“ But you only saw him ? ”

“ My eyes are never shut, Harry, except on my pillow. I could not travel a hundred and fifty miles and see nobody.”

“ Now, do be merciful. What did you hear of Cecilia, and who told you ? ”

“ Do you remember their lodge ? A blooming little child opened the gate for us. She had a rosary round her neck, and I wanted to buy it as an excuse for giving her half-a-crown. She would not sell it, for ‘ Miss Cecilia had given it to ~~her~~ me as a reward.’ I heard enough from that child to turn my head. Yours is turned

already ; so now, turn your horse's, for a gallop home."

"Upon my word, you will make me jealous." But he was already too far ahead to hear my reply. I did not spare the spur, but he reached home first. "It is a great point to have the governor with us on these occasions," thought I ; "but even his cleverness will fail me here."

A week wore away, and no answer came from either Lawrence or Farquhar. I wrote again—a fortnight more elapsed, and yet no answer. Expectation has an excitement peculiar to itself. We have it on Scriptural authority, that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." I had abandoned the idea of going to Glen Cottage, and forcing an interview with Cecilia, in the confidence that I should collect from Lawrence, and perhaps from Farquhar, some information that, to use the seaman's phrase, would tell me better how the coast lay. My father admitted to me that it was in this view that he asked

them. I began to droop under the perplexing feelings that oppressed me. My father saw it; and, at breakfast one morning, proposed the common remedial discipline of a continental visit; less common then than now, for the din of war had scarcely ceased. Averse as I was to quit England at a crisis so important to my future life, I had no alternative to propose; and we had half settled on the tour, when the post, which arrived at a late hour, brought a letter that decided us. It was from Lawrence's father, to myself, simply acknowledging the receipt of letters, which he inferred from the post-mark were mine, and which remained waiting his son's return from Paris, where his stay was uncertain. "To Paris then to-morrow morning," exclaimed my father. "No doubt Farquhar is with him."

Gentlemen, whether young or old, who want no more than a razor and a carpet-bag, may start for Australia at an hour's notice; but ladies

are not so easily transferable ; and recent events were not of a nature to allow an anxious mother to suffer me to quit her sight. Then, the girls could not be left behind. So that, with one thing or another—altering dresses, getting up linen, and arranging books, instruments, boxes, and bonnets—nearly a week elapsed before our plan could be carried into execution. When we at length reached town, a new impediment arose. I have mentioned that my father was in Parliament ; he sat for a ministerial borough. An early and important debate was expected, and the customary circular informed him that “ his attendance was most earnestly solicited.” Such solicitations were more peremptory in those days than even now. His absence was, in a moral sense, impossible ; and thus three weeks more were added to our delay.

“ We must put it off to the Easter holidays, Harry. There is no help for it. We will then see what Paris can do for us.”

I was far less sanguine than he, as to the

result of our visit to that city, and, except for that object, so indifferent about it, that I scarcely regretted its postponement.

It was not worth while to interrupt my narrative by stating in its proper place, that I had long since ascertained the status and connexions of Lawrence. He was the son of a wealthy trader in the city, occupying the foremost rank in that important class which forms the connecting link between the merchant and the shop-keeper. Many of the children of this class are highly educated, for it is one of the advantages of wealth that it brings its possessor into society where he becomes sensible that there are introductions which education alone can give, and which wealth cannot buy, though it may purchase the means. Hence many a parent, who has scarcely had any instruction beyond that which a grammar-school may supply, appreciates the value of that elegant learning which is all but exclusively confined to our public establishments.

Lawrence's father was possessed of natural

good sense and good taste ; he was conscious that, being himself only a gentleman by courtesy, he could not endow his son with ^{caste} by hereditary right ; but he could, by liberal education, invest him with the pretensions to rank which in modern times are rarely sifted, if sustained by average talent and apparent independence. Such was the history of his son's entrance at Cambridge. Young Lawrence might have done credit to his father's judgment but for this,—at home his acquirements were deemed marvellous, for they were singular—at college they were too common to receive even their fair meed of applause. Clever, superficial men, always abound at Cambridge. Thus, finding himself revered and flattered at home, and despairing of distinction away from home, he settled down into idleness, unreprieved by conscience ; and wasted time, that, well applied, would have made him an “acknowledged” man.

It suddenly occurred to me one day, as I found restlessness creeping over me with less and less power of resisting it, that, as some weeks had elapsed since I had received his father's letter, I might as well amuse myself with a ride to Highgate, to enquire about his return. The family occupied one of those old mansions which abound in that direction, and once were the seats, not of our merchants, but our nobles : many of them are still surrounded with lofty timber-trees—elms, cedars, oaks—whose bulky stems are relics of the state and dignity of former tenants. I fancy that our ancestors were either more hospitable, or greater sticklers for truth than the present free and easy and somewhat selfish generation ; for the very form of construction in the approaches to their houses, almost precluded the possibility of a “not at home” denial, unless the absence was *bond fide*. In traversing the ample court, common to the fronts of all these mansions of more than a

century in date, a quick eye can penetrate through every window, and mark whether stillness or animation prevails within.

As I rode up to the entrance door, I could easily perceive that ladies were seated in a large room, extending, as I judged from the cross light, to the entire depth of that wing of the building. On presenting my card, I asked for Mr. Lawrence, jun ; he was “ not within, but would return to dinner.” This was satisfactory, and, after a moment’s hesitation to determine on my course, I desired the man to say that I would call again in the evening, and turned my horse’s head to find some neighbouring inn ; but I had not reached the road before the man overtook me, with Mrs. Lawrence’s compliments, and an “ anxious” hope that I would allow my horse to be taken to their stables, and stay to dinner with the family. Nothing could be more agreeable to my views, nor was I without some lurking curiosity to view the *ménage* of Law-

rence's domicile. The servant ushered me to the drawing-room—there was but one lady there—she ran towards me with precipitate impatience, and in an instant I found myself in the sisterly embrace of Agnes Harrison!

“Agnes,” I exclaimed, “Agnes! what are *you* here? and *still* Agnes Harrison!”

“Here, and still Agnes Harrison!” and she smiled through tears that flowed without attempt to restrain them.

Some minutes elapsed before either of us felt disposed to say another word. We could only look at each other, and think of Cyril, whose name neither of us could utter. The deep mourning which we wore, spoke emphatically for both. To divert my own thoughts no less than her's, I turned to the subject of my previous question.

“If still Agnes Harrison, I conclude that it is not for long, or I should scarcely have found you established under this roof.”

“ You never were more mistaken in your life ! I am only here for four and twenty hours, and if your friend and I understand each other, of which I have my doubts, I am sure it is more than can be said for anybody else ! ”

“ Then, for pity’s sake, tell me what brought you here ? ”

“ Papa’s horses, and my own good will. ”

“ And where is your father—and your mamma—and— ”

“ And Cecilia, I suppose, you would add ? They are all at Dover, *en route* for Paris, if they have not crossed already. ”

“ And yourself—when do you join them ? ”

“ Not at all, if I can help it. ”

“ My dear Agnes—you torture me with your mysteries ; I think mystery is the soul of all of you. ”

“ Not of me, Henry. As to others—some at least—I won’t vouch for their having souls at all—or I should not enter a convent to-morrow. ”

“Convent! to-morrow! what does all this mean?”

“Nay, don’t be alarmed—and after all, ’tis no business of *your’s*, Henry: I only go to board there, and if I must perforce board in the one or the other, I would rather it should be in England than France: there is a better chance of coming out again.”

She could not resist laughing as she confessed it; but it was no laughing matter to me, for I could not but infer that Cecilia’s destination was the same, and I intimated as much.

“You are right, but I will not be ill-natured; Cecilia is made of less pliant material than I am, and is likely to have her own will.”

“And what will that ‘will’ be?”

“Nay, if you want explanations, ask herself: if you had possessed a particle of common sense, you would have done it long ago. I have more work of my own on hand than I well know how to manage, and cannot speak for her. But I

hear Mrs. Lawrence's step: not a word on this matter, I beseech you. She called at our hotel, and entreated permission to bring me here for a day: it was given promptly, I know not why; and here I am. Had we hours to spare, I could not tell you more."

"One word more: can you come to us too, for four-and-twenty hours? My mother will bring you."

"Henry, I dare not: and yet I dare do much."

Mrs. Lawrence was one of those active, bustling, every-day women, who, if they can boast of little else, may fairly claim to be the most useful appendage of a sober family. She gave me a homely and a hearty welcome, as if she had known me for twenty years, and yet, a welcome not untinged with vulgarity.

"Very glad you can stay to dinner, Mr. Stanley; it will be quite a treat to Edward! So little thought of seeing you; did we, Miss

Harrison? Edward often speaks of you. Hew surprised he *will* be!—but perhaps you wrote him you were coming?”

“I was not even aware ~~that~~ he had returned from the continent: my call was only to enquire when you expected him.”

“Oh! he returned ten days ago. And then for you to call the very day Miss Harrison is with us! What strange things do happen!—’tis quite a coincidence, I declare!”

“It certainly is a happy one for me; but let me ask after your son. How is he?”

“Well, Miss Harrison, haven’t you told Mr. Stanley yet? Well, that is odd, considering that you’ve seen more of Edward than we have since he left college. Ah, that was a sad matter, Mr. Stanley! it will be long ere his father forgets it. He shouldn’t have run away in that manner, like a bad boy from school. If he is altered, poor dear child, ’tis all owing to that.”

I trust that the alteration is not great?"

"He is not the man he was, Mr. Stanley, and never will be again. I am sure he worked himself too hard, as all you college gentlemen do."

It was a cruel remark, though kindly meant. Poor Agnes at once rose and left the room, her eyes filling rapidly, while my own silence indicated the turn given to my thoughts.

"Aye, poor thing! I forgot what cause she has to complain of it; and your face, too, Sir, is, I think, paler than your friends could wish, if I were one of them."

There was no saying how much farther the good old lady might choose to go, and, to arrest her volubility, I admired the garden.

"Yes, 'tis a fine garden, Sir, and so it ought to be, for it costs a deal of money, what with 'servatories, greenhouses, and one thing or other. Perhaps you would like a walk before

dinner? it's worth looking at. I'll ask Miss Harrison, for she hasn't seen it yet."

I was overjoyed at seeing her bring back Agnes, bonneted and shawled, and not less so to infer, from her own want of like preparation, that she was not going with us. "I'll join you before you have had time to go round the walks; I'm sure you will excuse me, Sir, but I have a few household matters to see to, first." I begged her, as may well be supposed, to waive all apologies.

"Now, my dear Agnes," I began, as soon as the old lady left us, "do admit me into your *rôle*—is your engagement to Lawrence an acknowledged thing?"

"And pray, what right have you, Henry, to assume that there is any engagement?"

"How can I doubt it? But your smile admits it, had I less reason to infer it."

"I never yet knew the man who could interpret a woman's smile: might not your

own credulity have provoked it, as well as my self-complacency?"

"We can tell when a smile springs from the heart, Agnes, and I am much deceived if your's is a heart that would trifle with another's feelings."

"Such a pretty speech entitles you to an honest answer; you shall have it, though it will not please you. I am *not* engaged to Mr. Lawrence."

And the smile had vanished indeed! It was succeeded by a short pause, which I would not break, because I saw that she was collecting herself for farther explanation; it came, slowly and painfully.

"Mr. Stanley—no, I can never again call you so; Henry, my only brother now, (and it was said with a sobbing sigh that for the moment seemed to choke her,) you know, Henry, that Lawrence has long been attached to me, and it would be paltry affectation to

deny that I return his affection : yet there is no engagement, and I fear there never can be one. I would not have been here to-day—indeed I would not, but for that horrid convent before my eyes !”

“ But, you told me that you only go there as a temporary boarder ?”

“ And so it is—but that is bad enough in all conscience, and to get a reprieve for even a few short hours, and to spend them here, was too tempting.”

“ And what precludes an engagement, where all parties seem to favour it ?”

“ All parties do *not* favour it—and I, the principal, am averse to it—on such conditions.”

“ Conditions, Agnes ! surely in your case no questions of money can arise !”

“ No, indeed ; I believe that is the last thing any of us have thought of.”

“ Then what *can* you mean ?”

I cannot tell you ; you must ask Lawrence, and if he tells you, you will believe me when I add, that his compliance with them would separate him and me for ever !”

“ Does he know that, Agnes ?”

“ Yes, unless he has yet to learn my character ; but we have never discussed the subject, nor will I dishonour him by believing a discussion necessary.”

“ And should he refuse compliance ?”

“ Then, Henry, then—it is vain to cheat myself, I never can be his—but never—never will I be another’s.”

There was an impassioned earnestness in this declaration, which was conclusive as to its sincerity, but which went far to satisfy me, that, had I been in Lawrence’s place, with cash in my pocket to pay the posting, she would have been *my* wife within an hour of the time then required for a Gretna visit. My ingenuity could imagine no “conditions” which would

prove an insurmountable bar, where affection was so strong, and so openly avowed.

I answered laughingly, "If that be so, I cannot think your case quite hopeless, Agnes."

"You will find it so, Henry, and your own will be the same."

This instantly checked my irony, and recalled me to my own position. "Agnes, this is most unkind of you; why conceal from me that which, you intimate, affects myself?"

"Because it is Cecilia's affair, not mine; and so far as I know, you are not a declared lover of Cecil, and much less a favoured one!"

"Agnes! this is no topic for jesting, Cyril, long since, told you all."

"Cyril never spoke or wrote a syllable on the matter: no doubt, we thought you a little smitten, when we were at Cambridge, and laughed about it among ourselves; but Cecil vindicated your discretion at the expense of your gallantry, and assured us that you had

never hinted such a thing, though you *had* looked enamoured folly to perfection."

"Well, then, I declare myself her lover now. I came here on purpose to find a clue to her, through Lawrence."

"I listen to no declarations of love unless to myself, Henry. There's no making love by deputy—go to Cecilia."

"For what purpose, if, as you say, my case is hopeless?"

"Because it would be silly to take a refusal from *me*! but here comes the whole party. Silence! even to Edward!"

CHAPTER XI.

“He would have had as much chance of success as the Sicilians, when they coax Mount Etna to abstain from an eruption.”

QUARTERLY REVIEW, 1827.

STILL mysterious ! even the lively, cheerful, natural Agnes, as mysterious as any of them : yet, certainly, it was true enough that I had as yet no other acknowledged claim on their confidence, than my intimacy with their lamented brother ; I had never “declared myself” as she called it, unless to him, or by the boyish petulance and jealousies of my attentions. But that Cecilia had seen what was the state of my

heart, I felt assured; her conduct showed this, at least; and that even, as I had flattered myself, she was not displeased to discover it; but what Cyril's motive could have been for suppressing my plain avowal to him, was a problem too deep for my comprehension. I had no time to pursue these reflections, for dinner was speedily announced.

The elder Lawrence was one of those men whose character cannot be mistaken, from the first moment; honest and home-spun, were traits stamped all over him, from head to foot; and they set off to advantage a shrewd, truth-telling manner of conversation, which is not at all times, by any means, an agreeable variety of the human voice. I was introduced to him in the garden, immediately on his arrival from the city, in the now obsolete but most convenient of all riding-dress,—top-boots, brown kerseymeres, and a drab great-coat of the old school: before dinner he changed these habiliments for

the equally ancient style of knee-breeches and silk stockings; a fashion in which our fathers gloried, not being ashamed of their legs; the only decent excuse that I could ever imagine for investing the nether limbs in shapeless sacks.

Our dinner was substantial, yet elegant, though not *recherché*; but I was less intent on the dishes than on the conversation. I could see, at a glance, that all was not right between old Lawrence and his son, but that might be attributable only to his sudden departure from Cambridge: nor was there any marked or peculiar attention paid to Agnes. I inferred that the mother only, as is often the case, was admitted to her son's confidence. Mr. Lawrence congratulated me on my success.

"You will, of course, have your fellowship, Stanley?"

"I do not intend to sit for one."

"No! well, perhaps you may not want it;

but a hundred a year or so is not to be sneezed at in these days. What are you to be?"

"I scarcely have thought of a profession yet."

"Nor yet of a wife then, I hope, (with a half-directed glance at his son, who shrunk from the remark), wives are confoundedly costly, I can tell you."

"And pray, Mr. Lawrence, what may I cost you, I should like to know?"

"A round oath for a bad dinner sometimes, Betty; but you have done pretty well to-day," and then, turning again to me, perhaps to avoid a pursing up of the mouth, which usually indicates unpleasant symptoms,

"You can tell me what is the use of a fellow-commoner's gown, for I never could get at it from Edward there."

"None that I know, except to cut chapel and lectures, and pay double for your mutton."

"So I suspected."

"You might have added, too," observed his son, with a little acrimony, "to cut low company in hall!"

"Low company, Ned!—low company! Take my word for it, boy, there are none so low as those who won't rise when they can!"

"I thought, Mr. Lawrence," interposed Agnes, "that my dear brother and Mr. Stanley were bosom friends?"

"I wish they had been, Miss Harrison: wish they had, and then he would have escaped all these new-fangled crotchets."

I felt so much, both for his son and Agnes, that though I died to know his meaning, I endeavoured to change the topic, and succeeded in doing so by some common-place question, as abrupt as it was common, respecting the effect, on commercial operations, of our new relations with the continent.

"Aye, aye; that means, let's have something rational. I'll tell you all about it." And he at

once dashed mid-deep into a speculative chapter on exports and imports—bullion and currency—bills and credits, of which I did not comprehend one word, but to which, nevertheless, I yielded profound attention till the ladies retired. No sooner, however, were they out of hearing, than, challenging me to another glass, he resumed :

“Very right, Stanley—very right. I thank you for your hint. Won’t do to offend the ladies, and there is no saying what may not offend them, when they begin to screw up their mouths ; never could bear to see a woman purse up her mouth—unless to be kissed. But I do say, Ned, that you got into a bad set, or you would never have played the mad freak of coming away without your degree.”

“I have told you already, father, that I had scruples of conscience which ought to account for it to your satisfaction, no less than to mine.”

“Scruples of a fiddlestick ! I suppose your friend Stanley, here, has as good a conscience as you ?”

“On such points, I think, Sir, every man should judge for himself: your son has never told me his scruples.”

“Don’t know them himself—quite sure of that. What are your scruples of conscience, Ned ?”

“Chapel attendance induced me to think seriously of—”

“Chapel attendance !—think seriously ! To be sure, you *should* think seriously when you go there ; but when in life did you ever think seriously till now ?”

“You forget, father, that I once subscribed the articles, and, though I did that without thinking, I have thought seriously of them since.”

“Well !—what then ? You would sign ’em again to-morrow, if need were, wouldn’t you, ?”

“No, Sir ; I would not.”

“The devil you wouldn’t!” exclaimed the old gentleman, in a tone of indignant surprise; “but I would soon know the reason why, if there were occasion.”

“I am afraid, Sir, you would scarcely understand my reasons, if I gave them.”

“I can understand one thing clearly enough, Edward, that if you refuse to do what your Church and your father tell you, you are an undutiful son of both.”

“I am a true son of the true Church, father, as much as I am a son of your’s; but this lecture, or admonition, or whatever you please to call it, can hardly be amusing to my friend Stanley.”

“Right—very right again, Ned. I thank you, too, for a hint. But hark ye, my boy:—I am not as blind as a mole, though I am a citizen: I think I see what you are driving at, and I tell you, once for all, that nonsense won’t go down with me. And now, Stanley, another

glass to the ladies:—they are dear, good creatures, after all.”

This smart colloquy—and shewing by its termination that Agnes had something to do with it—enlightened me a little, or at least furnished ground for deductions tending to enlightenment. Before we entered the drawing-room, I privately asked young Lawrence to dine with me the next day, intending in my own mind, to sift him as to these scruples of conscience, which, I concluded, had found their origin in the religious faith of Agnes. He assented, though not very cordially, probably suspecting my drift: for the remainder of the evening, he devoted himself much to Agnes; but refraining in his father’s presence, as I thought rather cautiously, from giving any marked character to his attentions.

As I left them, and bade an adieu to Agnes, which I expected would be a long one, she half whispered to me, “He *shall* dine with you

to-morrow : and if he discloses *all*, tell him from me, that my hand shall never be given to an undutiful son, either of father or Church."

It was obvious that he had informed her of what had passed, but I had no time to ask her to explain her ambiguous message. I only answered, in the same suppressed tone, "To quote your own words, Agnes, that is your affair, not mine. Tell him so yourself."

"I want the courage, Henry ; but I dare act where I dare not trust myself to speak. Adieu." And she turned away.

Before I had found my hat, I overheard the elder Lawrence summon the attendance of his son, in a tone of some severity. "A word with you in my private room, young gentleman." They crossed the hall before my servant had brought the horses to the door. I had a glance at Edward's face as he passed, and I could observe the mouth closed, and the lips compressed, as if he were working himself up to the

determination with which "young gentlemen" usually arm themselves for a decided scene with the governor, whether in matters of love or money—the two most awful of all subjects of paternal lecture. Neither of them noticed me again, and their silence was sufficient evidence of the burthen pressing on their minds. It was not till long after, that I heard the full particulars of their angry colloquy; but not to break my narrative, it is more convenient to give them now: it was begun by his father, with his wonted bluntness.

"What am I to understand from all this nonsense, Sir?"

"I wish to conceal nothing from you."

"Answer me, without shuffling, Ned: your friend Stanley is gone, and I've sent the ladies to bed; what do you mean by it?"

"If you will be more explicit, I will answer your questions honestly, but I scarcely understand you."

“Explicit, truly! Yes, Sir, I’ll be explicit enough: more than you’ll like, perhaps. In one word, are you—Papist or Christian?”

“I believe that all Papists are Christians: and many Christians are Papists. Will you please to explain yourself?”

“I believe you are an undutiful scoundrel, and care neither for father nor Pope!”

And he rambled about the room with vehemence, as if searching for some stick that might render the desired explanation more intelligible than an angry tongue could hope to do: but though the Gubbins’ blood is still hereditary in many families, the patrimonial crab-tree has happily become extinct. His son prudently remained quiet and silent, till the paternal wrath had in some measure evaporated in hearty anathemas against the Pope and all his subjects, spiritual or temporal, the soliloquy, however, was not of a kind to bear accurately transcribing.

“So this is college education!—And I’ve been paying some £300 a-year to teach this jackanapes to kiss the holy toes! D—n the Pope, and Cambridge too—and all that belongs to them. There’s little honesty off the city stones, I fancy. And pray tell me, young gentleman, if your father may presume so far, and if you’ve not quite lost your tongue,—(it could run on glibly enough to that black-eyed girl, though it can’t answer *me*!)—what business have you to trouble your head about Popes, or Purgatories, young sinner though you be? The Church of England—God bless her!—has been good enough for me and mine for this hundred years!—Should have thought it might have served *your* turn! though we have neither cowls nor candlesticks, and pray in good, honest English, as decent Christians should do. Still mum!—ch? Well, I’ve one more question that will find your tongue, if you’ve not swallowed it whole: and by—but no, ’tis on’,

Papists swear, and I'll be d—d 'ere I follow their example—but answer me this, or I'll leave every shilling I have to the Drapers' Alms-houses, and you may beg your bread with your head shaved :—will you marry Miss Thimble, and her ten thousand pounds?"

"No, Sir ; my affections are engaged already."

"They are, Sir, are they ?—and you have the impudence to tell me so to my face ?—but I guessed it. I suppose to Miss Black-eyes yonder ?"

"To Miss Agnes Harrison."

"Which pretty name they gave her, I conclude, to make her a nun in swaddling clothes !"

"She certainly belongs to the Church of Rome."

"I thought as much ! And my house is to be over-run with nuns and papists ; and my property to feed priests and Jesuits ; and my name to be held up to scorn in every Hall in the city, because my son—my only child, turns

traitor to his father's faith! I've lived too long—too long by half! I pity you, Sir, that you have lived to hear your father say it!”

And thereupon he left the room, refusing to listen to the entreaties of his son to allow him explanation.

I will not anticipate the result of this sad dissension.

CHAPTER XII.

“Serijs, ocyjs,
Omnes eodem cogimur.”

HORACE.

I reached home before my father had returned from the House ; my mother was expecting us, and my impatience would not permit me to wait for his arrival, before I told her all. It was but to repeat my narrative, and I could have repeated it twenty times : none but those who have enjoyed it, can conceive the exquisite happiness of unreserved confidence between parents and child.

“ Well, Mr. Stanley,” exclaimed my mother, as soon as he shewed himself, “ Henry has brought us such a budget. To Paris we must go.”

“ To Paris we must indeed go, my dear, for I have brought my budget too. I am entrusted with an important mission, as if to anticipate the leave of absence which I was about to ask.”

“ What may it be?” we both eagerly asked.

“ Political—so ask no more.”

“ Where there are no domestic secrets, reserve on others is easily forgiven, and without further inquiry from either of us, we reported the transactions of the day. My father listened not only with grave but with anxious attention, and, instead of speculating, as was his wont, upon probabilities and inferences, repeated, with still more emphasis than at first, “ To Paris we certainly must go, and go as soon as possible.”

“Not to-morrow, I hope, for remember that Lawrence is coming to dinner.”

“*I* must be off to-morrow, Henry ; but your mamma cannot be ready quite so soon. You can bring over her and your sister.”

The next morning he went, with his usual expedition, assuring me that one of his first steps should be to discover the Harrisons, as he quite concurred with me in the necessity of my declaring myself more explicitly, or, as he phrased it “coming to the point with Cecilia.” We were to follow in two days if possible, and I was to glean all that I could from Lawrence.

When the dinner-hour approached, I paced the room in anxious expectation of Lawrence’s arrival, and vainly speculating on the nature of those impossible “conditions” which were to be the terms of his union with Agnes, and if I understood her, were likely to be made the terms of my own ; I twisted and turned the matter in every way, but to little purpose. “Conditions”

implied the assent of paramount authority ; it was pretty obvious that the elder Lawrence might have his suspicions, but was not actually in the secret ; they could not be conditions imposed by Agnes, for she was the party complaining of them : I could only conclude that they were prescribed by her father : and what stipulation was *he* likely to make ?

Agnes had told me that they involved no pecuniary question ; no conditions could have neutralized objections arising from family pretension ; nor, though Harrison was of ancient descent, did he ever appear to value himself upon it, nor did he enjoy a rank to entitle him, without palpable absurdity, to oppose his daughter's marriage into a family that was rich and respectable ; in truth, Lawrence, though plebeian in his manners, was well connected in Ireland, and had large dealings and very considerable influence in that country. " Conditions " involving such minor points as residence, establish-

ment, *et similia* would never have caused a moment's thought to Agnes; the difference of religion might have been an insuperable objection to the engagement *in toto*, common as such alliances are; but then such an objection would have been taken *in limine*, and not reserved as an excuse for imposing "conditions" that could never remove it.

"Lawrence will explain it all in a few minutes," I thought, and the expectation of seeing Cecilia herself could scarcely have wound me up to a higher pitch of expectation. Most people get into the fidgets on such occasions, and wherever the mind is powerfully excited, especially self-excited, the orthodox rule in all romance is, to mount your horse, shut your eyes, dash in your spurs above the rowels, and gallop away over river and brook, wall and fence, down precipices and up cascades, striking out of every flint fire equal to a shower of rockets,

till you strike your head against the top branch of an oak, and are happily picked up by the next ploughboy. What I might have attempted if I had had a Mazeppa at hand, ready saddled and bridled, I cannot say ; but as it was, I only kept on pacing the quarter-deck in the drawing-room, and, when tired of that amusement, tattooed with my fingers on the loo table, and kept time with my toes on the floor : but I believe that I kicked up as much dust in that way, as I might have done in the other, though the occupation was less interesting.

We waited dinner for two hours :

“ Agnes is less omnipotent with the young gentleman than she thought herself ; it is clear that he *won't* come, and therefore we had better order up dinner.”

To which seasonable suggestion of my mother's I readily acceded ; my “ pitch of expectation ” having for some time past taken a turn in that direction. The cloth was scarcely

removed before a double knock announced an apology for the absentee, short and expressive.

“Dear Stanley,

“I’m back to Paris—and can’t come.

Your’s truly,

E. L.”

“All tends that way, it seems.”

“Did he hint nothing to you about it yesterday?”

“Not a syllable: a quarrel with Agnes or his governor, I dare say; matters looked ripe for it yesterday; but who can this be?”

For, at that instant, the visitors’ bell rung with unusual energy; a confused buzz of voices in an earnest tone followed the opening of the door, and the strangers, whoever they might be, were immediately shewn to the drawing-room.

“Who can it be, Thomas?” I inquired of the servant.

“Two ladies asking for my master first, Sir, and then for you ; they would not give their names.”

I flew up stairs, half suspecting who they were, and found Agnes and Mrs. Lawrence !

“Where is Edward ? Can you tell us where he is ?”

“Gone to Paris.” And I produced his note.

“Thank God it is no worse,” said Agnes, while his poor mother fell back on the sofa, in an excess of agitation that prevented her from uttering a word.

After I had left them the preceding evening, the violent altercation already described had occurred between Lawrence and his father, when the ladies had retired to their rooms. The cause, or the subject of it, could not then be ascertained : the elder Lawrence went to bed, unusually excited, and, as is not uncommon with men of his character, too angry to allow of coaxing into any coherent explanation ;

“young scape-grace,” “impudent young rascal,” varied in every tone and every form of commination, were all that his wife could draw from him. In the morning, his son, fearing a renewal of the scene, breakfasted early, and leaving only a line for Agnes, saying that there had been a quarrel, and entreating her to remain till it was appeased, left home. Scarcely had he been gone an hour, before his father was seized with an apoplectic fit, and of course all anxiety was absorbed in him, till late in the day, when the medical men considered immediate danger over. Meanwhile, young Lawrence did not return, nor had any of the messengers, who had been sent after him in all directions, succeeded in finding him. Agnes at last suggested that he was invited to dine with us, and the anxiety of the mother could only be satisfied by coming herself.

There is no time for much formality of introduction under such circumstances ; but my

mother's estimate of Agnes might be inferred from the earnestness with which she pressed her to remain. Her entreaties would, however, have been fruitless, but for a hint that fell from me; Mrs. Lawrence deprecated her going back to a sick house, while Agnes rather urged that as a reason for not quitting her when she might be of use.

"Your feeling is right, Agnes," I observed; "but is it not possible that your name may have been mixed up in this quarrel, and, in that case, that your presence may be injurious to the patient?"

So it was arranged that she should stay, while one of the servants returned with Mrs. Lawrence for her wardrobe. He brought back a very satisfactory report in the course of the evening, and composure was sufficiently restored to enable us to discuss our plans for the future.

"Then, what is your own proposal, Agnes?"

“A very naughty one, you will say, but, I think, the best ;” and she blushed so deeply that her smile, arch as it was, could not at once propitiate our assent : she hurried to finish her sentence, less to put an end to our suspense than to hide her own confusion. “To accompany you to Paris.” And she slightly, and as if accidentally arranged her veil, no doubt to avoid meeting my astonished look ; but with the decision that appeared hereditary in her family, she instantly threw it back again.

“I know not why I should be ashamed of it ; my motive is good and upright. Lawrence is gone, no doubt, to meet my father. In the temper in which he has left us, he will acknowledge no influence but mine, and if I am not here to curb him, the mischief may be endless and irreparable. If I do find him, I shall send him home immediately : if he refuses, you have not forgotten my message ; I will abide by it.”

My mother and I regarded each other with momentary surprise; the determination of Agnes was as proper as it was generous.

“And does Cecilia resemble you?” asked my mother.

“Not at all.”

“I am sorry for it; I hope the difference is not great.”

“She is not half so beautiful as I am—ask Henry.”

“I am not quite —” I began, but she would not let me speak.

“Nor half so lively,—is she Henry?”

But my mother good-naturedly interposed, and spared me farther bantering by stopping her mouth with a kiss of maternal affection. “If she has only half your amiability, she will win all our hearts.”

Yet I could see, *malgré* her levity of tone, that poor Agnes was labouring under much anxiety. It might be supposed that I should

gladly have availed myself of this opportunity of eliciting from her the nature of the impossible "conditions," but a sense of delicacy restrained me.

"While she is our guest," said my mother, she must feel under no obligation; leave it to herself, and she will tell you all she can tell you with honour, if more remains to be told."

I acquiesced.

CHAPTER XIII.

“But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion, too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?”

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

How entirely have railways destroyed the delights of travelling! That temporary transfusion of home into a post chariot, which, in former days, conveyed equal pleasure to young and old! The very first note of preparation is now one of trouble and vexation.

“Is anybody learned enough to tell us when the trains start for Dover?” There may be twenty people present, versed in all the mysteries of art

or science; but this knowledge transcends their powers. The servant is sent for a Bradshaw:—page after page of endless time-tables is turned over and examined. “We have abundance of time for packing and breakfast; the train does not go till twelve,” and arrangements are made accordingly: the new bonnets and bonnet-boxes must be sent home by breakfast-time. “Tell Mrs. Silky that nine will do:—let the carriage be here by eleven—not a minute later; and desire Rumble to fill the boxes, and put on new washers. My Chesterfield not come home! Send for it the first thing in the morning. Thomas will be ready to go to the city as soon as the bank opens. I shall want a check changed, and my banker’s book;” and so the day is fussed and frittered away by papa and mamma, while Jack, Tom, and Harry, lady’s maid, and housekeeper, are bustling, jostling, and pushing, up and down stairs, and scampering for this, that, and the other, over half the

town; Bradshaw lies on the table, and, after dinner, is again consulted for the hour of arrival, when,—

“Confusion seize these worse than logarithm tables! We are all wrong! the train starts at nine! twelve is the hour only on Sundays.”

New orders are given; new arrangements made; expresses dispatched in every direction for bonnets and Chesterfields—cash and coach-makers, and the house and all its contents fairly turned upside down; the governor raving; madame objurgating; children laughing; and all the rest chattering, prating, scolding, swearing, according to the prescribed duty of their respective places on such awful occasions.

“Here’s a pretty go!—plate not cleaned nor counted!” says the butler.

“Linen not aired!” screams the house-keeper.

“Blest if there’s ever a key or a buckle to box or portmanteau!” exclaims the valet.

“Is all them books to go back to the libry?” shouts the page, for the twentieth time.

“I must have my lady’s bonnet afore anything else!” shrieks Jemima.

“What will Master Rumble say to this?—and those wheels what won’t run a mile without new washers or a flare-up!” mutters the coachman, as he exhausts the tankard, shoulders on his top-coat, and d—s all hurry, all time-tables, and all railways—and especially the Dover Railway, and all that belongs to it, or travel by it!

By infinite exertion, night being devoted to the task, we arrive at the station a quarter before nine, just in time to place the carriage on a truck, when, to our dismay, the office doors are shut!

“What’s the matter now?”

“Just a quarter of an hour too late,” replies the policeman.

“Impossible!—Here is Bradshaw.”

“Oh, we have nothing to do with that.

Here's *our* time-table, corrected up to yesterday, the first of the month."

"And the next train?"

"There's no train as takes carriages for two hours!"

"Patience is the only remedy, my dear."

"Very true," rejoins the *pater familias*, "and so it is with the tooth-ache." And the instance is in point: for when two hours have elapsed, places are booked, tickets obtained, and nothing remains but to "take your seats," you find to a certainty, that each back seat is appropriated already, either by an umbrella, a carpet-bag, or a Scotch tartan: if you are so fortunate as to have an unsound tooth in your head, it will remind you in most consolatory terms, that no closing of windows, even if you are permitted to close them and they should by any luck be in a state to allow you to avail yourself of the permission, can exclude the draught created by a velocity of thirty miles an hour!

By especial providence, you arrive at your

destination without a broken limb, or other trifling casualty; you have even fumbled out your tickets without being knocked on the head by a policeman's truncheon, or locked up by a station-keeper till it suit his imperial convenience to convey you to a magistrate; nor have you sustained any loss more serious than your wife's and daughter's reticules, containing all their money, and half their trinkets, which you are kindly assured shall be inquired for, "though the company are not responsible for luggage," and of which you may be equally assured—(at least, on the Great Western, as I know by personal experience,)—that you will never hear again. Your first inquiry is for the packet.

"It sailed immediately after the eight o'clock train came in."

"And the next packet?"

"There is none till to-morrow." And you are left to your old remedy of patience, with the additional demands upon it of a face-ache, and

the extravagant charges of one or other of the most noisy, dirty, and uncomfortable hotels in the kingdom !

Such are a few of the delights of modern travelling ; such the saving of time and money gained by posting with whirlwinds for your team !—to say nothing of the spasmodic roar of engines ; of ignition by red-hot cinders, now and then entailing the sacrifice of an eye, if, anxious for an explanation of some mysterious delay that nobody will explain, you have the temerity to lean your head out of the window !—to say as little of groping through subterraneous passages, or between lofty cuttings of chalk, that look like whited sepulchres ; or worst of all, of the sneering insolence of petty officials, aping the airs of those mighty masters on whose nod they hold existence, and whose might is sustained only by the mysterious strength of irresponsible and anonymous power.

It is fervently to be hoped that the day will

come, ere long, when Chairmen, Directors, and *id genus omne*, will be required, like stage-coachmen, cabmen, and all other public carriers, to register their addresses, and wear a badge, and submit to imprisonment and the treadmill for every infraction of decency and good order. I never could see any sufficient reason for introducing a new aristocracy of privilege and exemption among a body which, when all is said that can be said for it, is not superior in occupation, and often far inferior in birth and information, to the plebeian class that used to drive our mails.

But under that beautiful and almost perfect system which obtained at the time to which these pages refer, English travelling was prolific in pleasurable excitement, and made us the envy of every nation in Europe. Safe, expeditious, varied and variable, like our own lovely country, abounding in comfort and in mutual courtesy, and scattering plenty, if not wealth, in every

province and every town through which our post-roads passed, travelling amused the thousands who daily indulged in it, and maintained tens of thousands in constant and compensating employ. Our swelling hills, and undulating valleys, and meandering rivers; our picturesque ruins, and rocky mountains, and boundless plains, became familiarized to every young eye, and were recalled to mind and recognised by their seniors, like the features of a loved and long-cherished friend whom we knew in youth, and whom separation for half-a-century cannot make us forget. Every parish spire and turret were remembered in affectionate association, as the land-mark of some adventurous day, or some scene tinged with a little travelling romance.

“ That was the inn at which we arrived late at night, ten years ago, the very imperial saturated with rain. What kind and unwearied attention we received ! There is the churchyard, mamma,

that you stopped to sketch, while the astonished post-boy kept telling you of the approaching storm, and that he had forgotten his great-coat :—that is the town where we met our friends the Wilsons, who arrived at the same moment, and drew lots for the best bed-rooms :—there is the very public-house at which the coach broke down, and made us first acquainted with those dear, good people, the Thornhills.”

But there were incidents of far deeper interest to the reflecting mind than those juvenile recollections. Every road teemed with animation ; every little village upon the road exhibited its busy groups of ostlers, helpers, horsekeepers, grooms, and stable-boys—every other house was either an inn or a chandler’s or collar-maker’s shop, or a farrier’s forge, and all were well employed, and for the most part well fed and happy : and what is of higher value still, Sunday, though too frequently desecrated by the equipages of rank and idleness, was, in the

main, a day of rest which man and beast alike enjoyed, and devoted to relief from labour, if not to sacred duty. I challenge the memories of those who resided in a posting country town, whether, after making all just allowances, there was not a far more striking contrast then, between the week-day and the sabbath, not merely in respect of noise and occupation, but of cleanliness, sobriety, regularity, and holiday attire, than there is in the present day?

Every road had its double line of posting ; so that it would have been difficult to travel six or seven miles without finding at least twelve pairs of horses : often, three times that number. Mr. Stokes, of Epping Place, once informed me that in the summer he kept on the average, a hundred pairs. Mr. Gellet, to whom the Lion at Wycombe then belonged, had an average of sixty pairs ; while each light post coach, and each mail, could not be horsed for its up and down journey, with less than a horse for every

mile.' At this time no less than sixty coaches of this description daily passed through the turnpike-gate at Staines ; now, there is but one.

Upon these data let us calculate the employment upon only a single road ; London, by Wycombe, to Oxford for example ; a distance of fifty-four miles, and which was daily traversed, at that time, by forty stage coaches. According to the statistics I have just given, two thousand four hundred and sixty horses would be required for the coaches ; and, if every post-master at the end of a six miles' interval, kept as many horses as Mr. Gellet, then one thousand and eighty more horses would be used by the posting-travellers, making a total of three thousand five hundred and forty. Now, it is a very moderate estimate that each lot of eight horses, required the labour of a man ; hence, four hundred and forty-two men found work as horse-keepers alone : each pair of posters also found work for a post-boy, and

so, five hundred and forty more were daily provided for: thus, putting out of the account, all the hangers-on of large stables and large inns, we have nearly one thousand men, with their wives and families, maintained by fifty-four miles of road, not to mention other domestic servants, or the multitude of shops and trades sustained by the demand caused by such a population.

Let those who exult in the improved travelling by railway, prosecute these calculations: they will find that—even limiting the posting-roads of England to five thousand miles in extent, not less than a hundred thousand families have been thrown out of daily work by this change of system, in the class of horse-keepers and post-boys alone! And what has been the result?—That there is scarcely a provincial town between two important termini, and destitute of its own peculiar manufacture, that is not reduced from prosperity to distress—from the life and

joy of comfort to the dull misery of despair. Our union-workhouses, our emigrant-transports, and too often our prisons, have absorbed this once cheerful and industrious class of our population; and small indeed is the compensation made by the new market which railways have found for labour.

If I have wandered from my immediate subject, the digression may not be without its interest, or its use. We started on our Parisian tour in happier times than these, and cause as we all had for anxiety, our anticipated journey did not fail to produce, at least for the moment, its usual exhilarating effect. Even packing up is not without its fun.

“ Shall I take this dress, mamma?—I *must* take that: I cannot do without my beautiful lilac! What *am* I to do to get this great package in! Well, all must come out again I see, and after I had so nicely arranged everything!”

“Oh, Mary! you have forgotten the music-books!”

“Why, I am not going to take that great, big duet-book!”

“Indeed you must, though; and two or three more.”

“Then what can I do with my dressing-case, and my work-box, and my darling sketch-book? And then there’s my dressing-gown!—that alone will fill half the box!”

“Leave them all behind. I am sure Henry won’t be plagued with so much luggage.”

“I can’t leave them behind. I can’t get on without them.”

“Henry—Henry do come here!—here is Mary will take all these things, we shall never get them in!”

However, with a little of my assistance, they *were* all “got in;” but not without crushing most inhumanly, sundry caps and collars, and reiterated assurances that “we shall have nothing

to put on," to all which I was obliged to turn a very deaf ear.

At last came the carriage to the door, to receive its manifold encumbrances of wells, imperials, boot-boxes, band-boxes, hat-boxes, and bags innumerable, attached by innumerable contrivances to every rail and corner and salient point: the pockets filled, the sword-case crammed, and scarcely leaving sufficient space to insinuate a thread-paper, much less four tolerable specimens of incarnate dust. Women, however, do contrive to seat themselves in the smallest nooks and corners; so at last we closed the carriage-door on my mother, Agnes, and my two sisters, while Jemima and myself mounted outside, and away we went, with as much speed and dust as four good horses, and two smart post-boys could contrive to raise between them.

Though a journey to Paris was a more dilatory, and in my opinion, a more amusing

affair at that time than it is now, I shall not stop to give an account of it, nor did anything occur worth mentioning, unless it was the impassioned enthusiasm with which Agnes surveyed the antiquities of Canterbury.

“Did the zeal of Protestants ever erect a pile like this? Here was piety indeed!”

“The zeal of Pagans erected yet nobler temples to their Gods: did that establish their orthodoxy?”

“It, at least, proved their sincerity. Their theology was bad, but their practice was correct: they worshipped, they knew not whom, but they did worship. They built appropriate altars for the sacrifices, and they offered their sacrifices with solemn forms and reverential rites, and even Emperors were proud to be the high-priests.”

“Yes, for piety as you call it, or superstition as I should term it, was fashionable.”

“You are wrong, Henry; fashion is a word

of time: religion has existed from all time. It has been clouded by superstition, it has been degraded by ignorance; its bright effulgence has been dimmed by too intimate a knowledge of the world; its peaceful tone has been overpowered by the din and clamour of temporal interests; but true religion has existed from eternal ages, and though silent, dimmed, and clouded, will for ever remain the same. I despise as much as you do all the religion of fashion, or more correctly speaking, all fashionable religion; it wants heart—it wants feeling. It would never have consecrated to God these holy shrines! If true, it would never surrender them to sordid exhibition by money-changing priests!”

“Must piety needs be stamped on bricks and mortar to prove its truth? Was there no religion in the Reformers, who cleansed these temples from their idolatry? Or in the Puritans, who desecrated and destroyed them, because too tainted for lustration?”

“Zeal will grow rampant in any cause: it is not for me to judge the motives, or the character of the fathers of your church, but that zeal is always open to suspicion which condemns as superstitious the sanctities of by-gone centuries. I despise a renegade; and especially a renegade who vindicates innovations on the score of conscience, when the same conscience has never prompted him to practise the faith in which he was educated whether that faith was right or wrong.”

“Then man must adhere to his early faith, be it right or wrong?”

“I said not so, Henry; but unless a man has acted up to his faith while he believed it right, I should discredit his sincerity in abandoning it, on the plea of conviction that it was wrong.

“He may have abandoned it because he found his former faith unproductive of works that he knows to be right?”

“All honest faith, even if erroneous, will

produce honest obedience, though I am a Roman Catholic that say so. The practical question is not as to the faith, but the sincerity: an apostate's first step is suicidal of his past merit. To obtain credit he must not only be a future saint on earth, but have shewn himself consistent as well as holy in all his former career."

These remarks of Agnes led to reflection which kept me long silent, while she appeared equally absorbed. As we returned to the Fountain, I could not resist the desire to ask,

"Are these your father's opinions, Agnes?"

"You will soon have the opportunity of asking him. They are my mother's, I believe: and I am sure they are Cecilia's."

I said that this enthusiastic burst of Agnes's was the only incident of our journey worthy of mention, but I was wrong. We spent a night at Calais, which was then the ordinary

route, and there I saw Farquhar, early the next morning, scaling a Paris diligence. As he did not see me, I avoided all recognition, though his appearance, with the same destination apparently in view, made me uncomfortable and embarrassed. I told Agnes, and she too seemed annoyed by the idea of falling in with him at Paris.

CHAPTER XIV.

“In the simplicity of my heart, I imagined I had succeeded.”

LORD BROUGHAM'S SPEECHES.

It was natural that when the tumult of the continental war had ceased,—and as we may hope, for ever, the agitation of matters of domestic interest should commence. The claims of many classes on legislative attention had long been suspended for a more tranquil time : ~~they had never been abandoned ; but questions of more pressing urgency, if not more important, had occupied the attention not only of the legis-~~

lature, but of the public. War!—war! was the cry of the day for many a long year. We witnessed not its calamities, except in increasing taxation; in casualties of service that now and then reached every hearth; or in some maimed, half-limbless mendicant, whose appearance spoke the sad reality of the struggle; but we heard our triumphs announced by Park and Tower guns weekly, and sometimes daily; every Gazette was expected with anxiety, not to afford accounts of the killed and wounded, but of the glories of the survivors.

We thought not of the dead, but of the living; and all fell flat on the British ear that did not speak of Peninsular success, or trophies won in yet more deadly conflict with the star-spangled banner of America. It was an awful epoch: in nothing more awful than in the selfish excitement in which our generous nation was absorbed, to the utter exclusion of every public topic of home interest; an excitement of

reflected honour, in which few comparatively had their personal share, but in which all assumed more than reasonable pride.

Among many other large subjects thus awaiting, though not very patiently, the leisure of the public mind, was that of Catholic Emancipation. Mr. Grattan again and again brought it forward, but rather to keep the claim alive, than with any well-founded hope of success : he died while it was yet one of the bare possibilities of human events. In 1820 it was, however, more advanced than even the most sanguine could have expected, and it was no longer a question of concession, but only of extent.

One of the essential difficulties involved the appointment of Roman Catholic Bishops : were they to be nominated by the See of Rome, subject to the veto of our Crown ? It was argued, and perhaps truly, that from time immemorial the Pope had abandoned all nomination, and left the election to the spiritual heads of Ireland. It

was rejoined with justice, that such a sweeping measure as Emancipation must not leave this important point unsettled, or to the decision of loose and fluctuating custom. Yet it was felt that on this, and also on some other practical points, our government was not in that full and accurate possession of the prevailing opinion in the Church of Rome, or of its influential members, that enabled it to judge properly either of the limits within which concession must in policy be restrained, or of the extent to which it might prudently be carried.

My father was no diplomatist, nor was diplomacy the faculty required to make the necessary inquiry, for the information was not to be elicited from Cardinals or Legates. To deal with Jesuits of the modern school, shrewd sense no doubt is wanted—and downright honesty still more. In both ~~these~~ qualities my father excelled, and his ~~political~~ principles afforded a reasonable ~~guarantee~~, that if he erred,

at all, it would not be on the side of concession. Hence he was selected by the minister as the fittest man to discharge this difficult and delicate commission of inquiry, though it was not for a considerable time that we collected the nature of his new duty.

When we arrived at Paris, it was with feelings of anxiety and surprise that we learned he had already left it, and, as we were informed at the ambassador's, for Italy. It added greatly to our common embarrassment; not only on my own account, but for Agnes his countenance and counsel appeared more than ever requisite. For myself, resolute as I was to seize the first opportunity of declaring myself openly to Cecilia and her father, this absence threatened difficulties that I knew not how to encounter; and Agnes confessed that she had looked to him for protection, should she want it, against the anger of Mr. Harrison, for thus breaking through the domestic arrangement

which he had fixed at his departure from England.

To add complication to our troubles, we could learn nothing either of Lawrence or the Harrisons. Agnes, in her abrupt departure from town, had omitted to leave any directions for forwarding her letters, and in our inexperience, we had assumed as a thing of course, that the address of any stranger could be promptly ascertained by inquiry at the passport-office. We made this inquiry immediately, but we could learn no more than that Lawrence had certainly arrived at Paris, and in the first instance gone to Meurice's, the hotel then frequented by Englishmen; but he had remained there for only four and twenty hours, and we lost every trace of him. Harrison's movements were wholly untraceable. Possibly Farquhar, whom I saw once or twice lounging about the Boulevards, could have supplied a clue, but it might prove so inconvenient to my plans to be encum-

bered with his company at the present crisis, and I cherished such an antipathy to the man, that I could not bring myself into communication with him.

Such was the state of affairs, when the tenth day after our arrival brought us a letter from my father, intimating that his return by Paris was very doubtful, and that our plans must be independent of him. Agnes too, had written to England, but she obtained no letter except a few hurried lines from Mrs. Lawrence, giving favourable accounts of her husband, but far from announcing his convalescence. They had heard nothing of Edward. It began to be apparent that we had, in vulgar parlance, come upon a fool's errand, and my mother felt much disposed to go home again; the rather, as she interpreted my father's letter to convey that as his own opinion. Meanwhile, I occupied myself every day with perambulating the city, and especially the gardens of the Tuileries, and all the

usual promenades, for the chance of encountering Lawrence.

On one of these rambles I was passing a *restaurateur's*, which I had frequently observed to be a favourite resort of our countrymen, and, being fatigued, I entered with the intention of dining there. The room was well filled, but I noticed only four or five Englishmen in the party; the rest were Frenchmen. The army of occupation had long been withdrawn; but there still existed an angry feeling of national jealousy, which often betrayed itself by insult, and not unfrequently led to serious altercation. The English, in most of these cases, were compelled to put up with the insult, at the penalty of fighting an unfair duel, or of meeting with contemptuous injustice instead of legal redress. But wanton offence was sometimes carried beyond the power of endurance, particularly if the offender was backed by numbers.

I had just paid for ~~my~~ dinner, and was about

to withdraw, when some loud tones at the extremity of the coffee-room, where two Englishmen were dining, arrested my attention. The commencement of the quarrel was unperceived by me, but I subsequently heard* that a French officer, after many insolent remarks, uttered so loudly as clearly to be intended for the English ears, had stopped one of the dishes on its way to their table, exclaiming, “ *Ces bêtes d’Anglais, nous verrons de quoi ils se gorgent,*” and, cutting off a piece of the steak, put it into

* An anecdote is given in a popular work, similar in its general features to that which is mentioned in the text. No doubt such occurrences were frequent. The author received this version of one of them, from the late Captain R. Robison, who accompanied the Peninsular army into France. He was a brave officer and a worthy man. The only essential departure from the fact, as Captain Robison related them, is that a challenge ensued, which was refused under the sanction of the other officers of the gentleman that inflicted the well-merited chastisement.

his mouth, and spit it out again, as if 'at the gentlemen who were waiting for the dish. It was just at this moment that I observed my countryman, a huge man, of stature almost gigantic, and with a true Saxon countenance, fair, frank, and good-humoured, rise from his chair, pick up the piece of meat from the floor, and cover it with mustard, as if about to eat it himself; he then gave a wink to his companion, and in less time than it takes to describe the action, each seized upon an arm, laid the officer on his back, and forced the dainty morsel into his mouth, retorting, "*Chez nous on ne peut pas engouler la viande sans la moutarde!*"

It was not to be supposed that even the ludicrous character of the scene, still less the equity of the punishment, would prevent a catastrophe. The officer was on his feet the instant they released him, and spitting, sputtering, *sacré-ing*, and swearing, drew his sword, but with such tremulous rage, that the English-

man "disarmed him in a second, while his companion seized his walking-stick of heavy oak, and, placing their backs to the wall, they faced the whole party with a determination that kept them at bay, though there were many.

It was not in human nature to stand by as neutral. I joined the other Englishmen in the room, and thus supported, the giant-purveyor of mustard rushed upon his assailants, and forcibly ejected them, with sundry cuffs and kicks, far less honourable than painful in their results, though our opponents numbered at least three to one against us. No severer wound was inflicted on either side, and we were thus released from the immediate affray. But our triumph was of short duration.

We mutually agreed to quit the *café* in a body, for our common security. There were five of us altogether, and most of us powerful young men, though unarmed, for, as soon as the room was cleared, the Saxon giant snapped the sword

in two as if it had been a bull-rush, and threw the fragments after its owner. We reached the end of the street unmolested, and, seeing no risk of the assault being renewed, we separated, and pursued our respective ways. What befel my companions I do not know, but I had scarcely reached the Place Vendôme, when, on turning the corner, I was arrested by two *gens d'armes* with such rude violence, that one of them tore open my waistcoat, and broke the guard by which Cecilia's portrait was suspended round my neck: of course I resisted, though more with the intention of recovering the painting, than from any purpose of escape; but my efforts were in vain; the man's comrade immediately felled me with a blow, and I did not recover my consciousness till I found myself in the custody of a *sergent de ville*.

I troubled myself little about the result, as, except the pain I received from the blow, and the yet more painful vexation arising from the

loss of the portrait, I was satisfied that a few hours' confinement was all I had to suffer; but when I asked for writing materials to communicate with my friends, they were not only denied me, but my request immediately followed by a coarse examination of my person, and every valuable about me taken away. I began to feel anxiety as to the next step. I was not long kept in suspense.

I was hurried before a magistrate as soon as the process of search was completed; it is only fair to assume that if my station and character had been known, I should have escaped the indignities to which I was subjected; but as it was, I was handcuffed to a miserable being with whom even simple contact seemed dangerous, and escorted through the streets in most melancholy plight. I had lost my hat in the squabble; I was still bleeding from the ferocious assault, and my coat was torn to tatters. All trifles in themselves, yet conveying a sense of

degradation which the philosophy of two-and-twenty feels difficult to brook.. "Well," I thought to myself, "this is ^{very} mortifying, but it is of no great consequence ; I have only taken part with my countrymen when insulted and outraged, and if there is a spark of generous feeling in the magistrate, I am secure from further annoyance."

But there were demons at work, of whose machinations I was unconscious. I am at a loss to say whether my astonishment was greater at finding myself accused of theft, or at learning, as I did with difficulty, that Farquhar was my accuser ! I had always regarded this coxcomb with contempt no less than with antipathy ; but now I felt a kind of mysterious awe of him, that often arises when a man is the victim of motives that he cannot fathom.

It will be recollected that I had had no intercourse with Farquhar since the day that he left Cambridge, for the purpose of taking back

to Mr. Harrison the papers that had been scattered out of the broken desk, when he and Lawrence founded upon this pretext an excuse for anticipating the time of their visit to Glen Cottage. I had heard from my father that this plan had actually been carried into execution, and with no favourable effect, as regarded the impression on Mr. Harrison; beyond this, I was a stranger to all that had occurred; nor, in truth, had I any clue to the objects of Farquhar in thus forcing himself upon their circle, except the natural jealousy occasioned by my love for Cecilia, with whom I, of course, concluded that everybody must be as much in love as myself. This feeling had, for a time, caused much irritation; but reflection had removed it by a conviction that neither Cecilia nor her father would long tolerate the attentions of such a conceited fool.

I was still, however, a little uneasy on the subject, though relieved by the indifference with

which Agnes had spoken of him: she had scarcely mentioned his name, while, on the other hand, she had bantered me about her sister, in a way that was certainly inconsistent with an acknowledged engagement to any other, though not very encouraging to myself. That Farquhar had no partiality for me I could well believe, as I had none for him, and was above affecting it. It is difficult to account for either antipathies or attachments; but no man who has watched the workings of his own breast, can doubt that there does exist a sort of preconceived aversion or affinity towards a stranger on his first introduction, which is not often removed on better acquaintance, and where it exists, is always mutual.

Farquhar had been more remarkable for his consummate self-complacency, than for any other quality. He had once had his head examined by Deville; fortunately for him the craniologist could not penetrate the inside of it, and, in

becoming gratitude for the ten shilling fee, declared him to be gifted with large organs of comprehensiveness, perceptiveness, retentiveness, and every amiable faculty of which "ive" and "ness," could conveniently be made the adjuncts. "It was a mind of the first quality ; and if not the very first in the first class, nature had only just missed the formation."

"I could not have conceived such truth in the science," complacently observed the coxcomb, "he never saw me before, and yet he has exactly hit off my character ; it is very strange how he should have discovered it !" and from that day, Farquhar avowed himself a convert to craniological faith ; but so he did to every faith that was new, and, as he believed, fashionable ; for a time he upheld Johanna Southcote.—then he shifted to the school of Irving ; he was disposed to join the Quakers, but he never could endure a brown coat or worsted stockings.

Mahomet would equally have been the idol of

his devotion, but for a similar repugnance to frequent ablutions and smiple p^otations. Yet coxcomb and weathercock as he was, he was cunning and plausible; he had always more to say than anybody else, and said it with a confidence that gained the ears of shallow auditors. He was profoundly versed in all penny per cent theory and calculation; could adjust to the fraction of a farthing, the due deduction from annual profit arising from the excess of sixpence in a cost price, and was admirably adapted to keep a petty chandlery shop, or the books of an official assignee. He had been for a year or two at Eton, and brought away from it none of its learning, but all the mean servility of a fag, and all the yet meaner tyranny of a master. Such was the character of the man who now, for reasons best known to himself, but which at a later day, I was enabled to penetrate, appeared as my accuser of a crime of infamy.

On first entering the "Cabinet du Juge d'In-

struction," or as we should call it, the magistrate's office, I found that I was confronted with nobody; but, whether by right or by unwonted indulgence to me as a foreigner, I cannot say, I was allowed to read the evidence against me. Such, however, was the inflated story, that I might reasonably have concluded that the witnesses were strangers narrating a different affair, in which I had taken no part. Our numbers were multiplied from five to fifteen, and a yet more ingenious cloak was found for the want of military spirit implied by this appeal to the civil authority, in the absurd pretence that they had been robbed of twenty napoleons, two of which they identified with some that were found on my person; and strange to say, this seemed to be the only part of their evidence that was well sustained, for both of the pieces were peculiarly marked. This admitted of a simple explanation: on paying for my dinner, I had obtained change for some

double napoleons, and these two had doubtless been paid by the French officer, or some of his party, to the *restaurateur* only the instant before.

While the magistrate was still hesitating as to the propriety of complying with my urgent request, to send for the man, to confirm my story or contradict it, his secretary informed him that there was a second charge, preferred by a fellow-countryman of my own. I was so confounded by this intimation, that, for a moment, I was unable to speak. As soon as I recovered myself, I assured the magistrate with so much earnestness, that it must be made in error—that Farquhar was a personal friend, and that either his name had been fraudulently assumed or my person mistaken, that, after many assurances that it was quite irregular—entirely out of the question—a breach of duty, and so forth, he gave way to my entreaty, and sent for Farquhar, who was waiting for examination in an adjoining

room. • I at once, very naturally, appealed to him to assure the magistrate of my true character and position in my native country, with a cheerful confidence that could only spring from conscious innocence ; but what was my amazement when the fellow, affecting to disdain all intimacy, addressed the magistrate :

“ Et moi aussi, Monsieur, je me plains de lui ; je l'accuse encore de vol.”

My first impression was that my contused and swollen features had deceived him.

“ Farquhar,” I exclaimed, “ surely you know me ?” But when he again turned to the magistrate, addressing his answer to him, and significantly shaking his head, “ Ah, que oui ! je ne le connais que trop bien !” I set him down for mad, and waited patiently to hear what ingenious tale the malice of insanity could invent.

Words fail to do justice to my astonishment when he produced the portrait of Cecilia, and deliberately charged me with having stolen it from

the desk of his friend, "Cyril Harrison, Esq., not at present resident in Paris," I was lost in wonder. Indignation soon released my tongue. "Impudent, perjured scoundrel!" I began, but I was not allowed to proceed.

"Tais-toi, coquin; vraiment c'est un tour de coquin; votre colère est une preuve de votre crime."

And, not to justify the inference, I continued silent, while Farquhar gave his version of the matter, and, on the whole, with tolerable accuracy.

"Eh bien, fripon! que répondez-vous? Que dites-vous à cette nouvelle accusation?"

"J'ai acheté ce portrait-là dans une boutique à Cambridge sans en connaître l'original."

"Et pourquoi donc le porter à votre cou?"

"Parce que c'est la ressemblance frappante d'une amie qui m'est chère."

"Et votre amie, comment s'appelle-t-elle?"

I could not bring myself to mention Cecilia's name in such polluted presence, and I declined.

“Fort bien ; comme vous voudrez ;—mais quel en fut le prix ?”

“Dix schellings.”

“Ma foi ! je crois qu’il est bien nouveau dans son métier, tout fripon qu’il est,” said the magistrate, who had for some time been closely examining the setting, and, touching a spring which had hitherto escaped my notice, the back flew open, and discovered a small crucifix richly set in brilliants.

“En vérité faut-il que son prix ne soit que dix schellings !”

This was conclusive. Of course I was remanded to prison ; nor could all my entreaties obtain for me permission to write to my family, or induce Farquhar to grant me a private interview. One circumstance did afford me some comfort : the portrait was not lost, and, thanks to the punctilious accuracy of French process, was carefully impounded to be forthcoming at my trial.

CHAPTER XV.

“ Nunc viribus utere totis ;
Pelle moram ; vinces.”

OVID. MET.

I HAD ample room for speculation, as well as for anxiety. There was no great difficulty in accounting for the history of the portrait ; and, when thus identified, I soon arrived at the conclusion that Mrs. Harrison, not Cecilia, was the original ; that it had fallen out of the desk when the tandem was overturned, and been picked up by some countryman, who had sold it to the Cambridge shopkeeper of whom I bought

it ; the valuable stones having escaped their eyes as well as my own.

Thus far the mystery was easily intelligible ; but how came Farquhar to know of it ? How was he enabled to identify it ? What was his motive for busying himself in its recovery ? Why not have taken the more obvious course of apprizing me of the true owner, and desiring me to restore it ? And above all, what could have provoked the vindictive malice that led him to side with my enemies, and which, if not defeated, might terminate in my ignominious sentence to the galleys ?

There was only one motive that presented itself, and even that was not without its difficulties ; that he was an avowed suitor for Cecilia's hand, and wished to free himself from a dangerous rival. But could he possibly think that this was likely to prove a successful course to her affections ?—to blight the fame, and condemn to chains, the beloved friend of her

loved and lost brother, and to effect, it too by perjury? For, though Cyril ~~was~~ no more, my sisters knew that I had shown the picture to him, and the Cambridge 'tradesman' could prove my purchase of it.

I revolved all these matters in my mind till weary of the vain effort to explain them; and then they were superseded by other reflections not less painful—the distress of my family at my strange absence—the shock which they would sustain in learning its cause—the interruption of all my pursuit of Cecilia; nor, if mentioned last, was it by any means the least of my troubles, that I found myself a close prisoner, without clothes, or money, or food, and likely to remain in this pleasant extremity until by some accident my mother should hear of my disaster.

“But that surely must be to-morrow at the latest. Farquhar can scarcely be such a brute as to withhold the affair from them; besides, there

•is a chance of its publication leading to my discovery,” and I resigned myself to a night’s confinement without much repining. A good-natured, merry fellow who was in the same room with me, allowed me to share his not very palatable bread and broth, in return for sundry particulars with which I supplied him respecting the then police system of England, and which he may possibly have turned to good account, subsequently. On the following day but one, this man was discharged, and promised me to use the first hour of his liberty in calling on my mother. He did not do so, and I remained a prisoner till my trial.

Day after day passed over, and yet I heard nothing from my family, nor did any inquiry for me reach my ears; while, though exposed to no other annoyance than the want of clothes and very scanty fare, my privation of all means of intercourse with my friends seemed to be enforced with a severity neither shown to others.

nor called for by the nature of my alleged offence. Some of my fellow-prisoners comforted me by the assurance that writing materials would be useless, no letters being conveyed to the post, or allowed to be written, except for the chance of their criminating the writer. I believe that the surveillance of the French police is, in all cases, far more rigorous than with ourselves; more particularly as regards offenders of foreign birth, and I might, under the peculiar circumstances of my case, be well suspected of belonging to the worst class of English *chevaliers d'industrie*.

I explained to the *guichetier* or turnkey, the situation and high respectability of my connections, and how easily the truth of my story might be ascertained, but the man only shrugged his shoulders, and grinned incredulity, "Ah, Monsieur, il n'y a que des honnêtes gens ici."

Illness, misfortune, domestic sorrow, all have

their depressing and heavy influence, but elasticity of animal spirits, or energy of mind, will, sooner or later, triumph over their power. It is not so with close imprisonment; even the consciousness of innocence fails to sustain, and often, perhaps, aggravates desponding languor. Careless of occupation, which even when found, must be monotonous, shut out from all intercourse with man, except in that debased circle whose members community of guilt has reduced to worse than republican equality,—life, deprived of its utility, its ornaments, its alternations of pain and pleasure, becomes a weary burthen, which cannot be lightened and must not be laid down. No wonder that the excellent Mrs. Fry was idolized by the wretched class whom she taught to cherish the hopes of eternity, when all other hope was extinguished by this dreadful penalty of crime.

It has often occurred to me as a singular omission in our prison discipline, as applicable

to all who are confined for short periods, and then to be thrown back on the world, that no systematic information is conveyed to them, in official form, of the sufferings of the transported convict. I have conversed with many of that class from which our hulks are, for the most part, supplied:—the poachers, pilferers, and young pickpockets,—who are first the implements and then the authors of deeper crime, and I never found one who considered that banishment to Australia implied more privation than that entailed by a long voyage, while a fair indemnity for all suffering was offered, by the chance of acquiring a fortune in a country where land is cheap and labour scarce. Of the chains, the public works, the martial severity of daily discipline, in a word, of the slavish character of the condition, the idle, dissolute labourer has not even the shadow of an idea, and thus prospective punishment loses half its terrors.

But, alas! the reforms required in our criminal practice, the utter want of a *preventive* system upon any sound, uniform, and judicious principle, the total inefficiency and general ignorance of our country magistrates, the very inadequate supply of even these officials, feeble and incompetent as they are, the absolute destitution of constabulary authority in places where vice and crime abound, and above all, the costly, tedious, and circuitous machinery by which penalty is brought home to guilt, form a chapter of inquiry too vast for any but Legislative attention.

As the hour of my trial drew near, the excitement of expectation had a stimulating and beneficial effect: even my appearance, slovenly and cadaverous as it had become, as well from the actual want of clean linen and other common necessities, as from the confinement of a narrow yard, and scanty food, improved and assumed a better tone; the hope of speedy extrication

from my long and unmerited incarceration, for I had now been nearly a month in the prison, operated as a cordial, and enabled me to prepare myself for my defence with more spirit than I could have anticipated. Yet what could I hope to effect, when deprived of every means of bringing forward the only witnesses who could establish my innocence?

Two days before the appointed time, I was summoned to the private apartments of the governor; and the joy with which I obeyed the summons, concluding as I did, that at length my friends had discovered me, may be readily conceived. Dirty, unshaved, and with clothes so tattered that they scarcely covered me with decency, I flew rather than ran to be welcomed by my mother's embrace, when, to my consternation, I found myself with—Mr. Harrison!

“Is it only *you*!” I exclaimed, with a bitterness of disappointment such as I had never

previously experienced.—“What can *you* want with me?”

“Merely to suggest that you may possibly mitigate your sentence by restoring the papers as well as the portrait.”

“And you have really come, on this pretext, to insult a man, whom you well know to be the victim of falsehood and perjury?”

“Yes; a distance of four hundred miles.”

“Then, Sir, you might have saved yourself the trouble, and me the indignity; and if I answer with such moderation, it is only because I cannot forget that you are Cyril’s father?”

“Or, perhaps, you mean Cecilia’s?”

“And if I did, Sir, I would not profane her name by mentioning it in such a place as this!”

“You are right, young man! more right than you suppose. One who ere long will dedicate herself to her Saviour, at his holy

altar, cannot be mentioned by you, without profanity !”

What immediately followed, I cannot say,—for I fell senseless at his feet. My long cherished hopes to be thus blighted in an instant—all the end and object of my life, on which my heart had so long dwelt, and with a truth and a devotion of which I was scarcely myself aware till now, to be thus abruptly, cruelly, and as it seemed, irretrievably blasted by the very man who, as I had promised myself, would rather promote it, was more than my debilitated frame, labouring too under temporary excitement, could endure.

On recovering my consciousness I found that a change for the better had taken place in my position. I was lying on a clean bed, in a comfortable and well-furnished room, but still, as I perceived from the iron-barred windows, within the precincts of the gaol. A medical man was in attendance upon me, and, as I perceived,

had already bled me. Mr. Harrison had disappeared.

"Where is he, gone?" and I shuddered as I asked the question.

"Soyez tranquille, mon enfant, votre père reviendra bientôt."

"Mon père!" I repeated in a tone of scorn, "mon père! celui-là mon père! vous vous trompez, Monsieur."

"Qui que ce soit, il reviendra tout à l'heure; pourvu que vous restiez calme."

I was about to deprecate his return, but it occurred to me after a moment's reflection, that I had little chance of hearing anything more of Cecilia, and still less of discovering her present abode, except so far as her father might incautiously let it escape him. Another thought too, crossed my mind; the Doctor seemed to be kind both in tone and manner; he was the only individual that I had seen since my imprisonment, except my fellow-prisoners and the

attendant officers. I might possibly prevail on him to report my position to my mother, if I could get any credit with him for my innocence; or even if he discredited it, humanity might induce him to make my state known to them.

“ Vous savez bien, Monsieur, que je suis prisonnier, mais je ne suis pas coupable : vous pouvez me rendre un grand service.”

“ Comment ?”

“ Mes parens ne savent rien de mon état ; on m’a privé de tous moyens de leur communiquer mes affaires.”

“ Ils ne s’en réjouiraient pas, peut-être.”

“ Il est vrai ; mais ils se réjouiraient beaucoup d’apprendre la vérité, et ils ne peuvent l’apprendre que de moi.”

I saw that my composed manner impressed him, and I earnestly repeated my request ; he yielded.

“ Au moins, il faut les informer de votre

santé; mais ce Monsieur qui s'appelle votre père, qui est-il?"

"Mon ennemi."

"C'est-à-dire, votre accusateur! mais n'importe; je verrai vos parens s'il est possible; donnez-moi leur adresse."

And I gave him the direction to our lodging. He soon left me, after various and wise suggestions of the necessity of keeping myself quiet. Medical men always take their leave with most sagacious counsel of this description, but it is usually of no value, unless backed by a dose of laudanum or henbane. As I was circumstanced, all the sedatives of the vegetable world, in their concentrated essence, could scarcely have kept me quiet; for, within half an hour of his leaving me, Mr. Harrison again entered. He approached the bed quietly and gently, but the sight of him was enough to rekindle irritation, and no doubt I should have given way to it with a vengeance, but that the image of

Cecilia was still uppermost in my mind. I determined to be on my guard this time: for I felt assured that he had something in view to gain of me, or he would not have been thus pertinacious in his visits. I was then very young, but I had not been a prisoner for a month for nothing; and I had learned that a successful parry often affords opportunity for a direct thrust. The experience of riper years has fully confirmed the wisdom of this policy.

“How do you feel yourself, young man?”

The question itself, and even the tone of it, was conciliatory; but it was the second time that he had addressed me by a title which, however honourable under certain circumstances, particularly when given to youths of seventeen, manhood being scarcely their acknowledged status, is extremely galling, as an intimation not only of loss of intimacy but of caste. Situated as I was at the time, it was peculiarly irksome, and had well-nigh dissipated all my

prudential resolutions of self-command. To recover myself, I remained silent, and thereby gave him the opportunity of repeating the question in a less disdainful form.

“Are you better?”

“A prisoner is rarely well ; but I believe that I am able to bear any thing more that you may have to tell me.”

“You will be tried the day after to-morrow.”

“I have long been aware of that.”

“But not, perhaps, of your punishment?”

“I am too conscious of innocence to have thought of punishment.”

“Innocent men have suffered punishment before now.”

“And may do again, Mr. Harrison, no doubt. But let us come to the point: what do you want of me?”

“Very little. What have you done with my papers?”

I felt convinced that this anxiety about lost

papers was sincere ; but I had nothing to say that could relieve it,—and my object was to gain information, not to give it. I therefore hesitated in my answer, and began to suspect that I had a weapon put into my hand, if I could only make out how to use it. Still, to gain time, I retorted by the question,

“Has not Farquhar told you all the circumstances?”

“What circumstances?”

“His finding that you had left your desk behind,—his following you with it,—and the accident that happened.”

“Yes, I heard of all this.”

“Then I presume, you also heard that your son sealed up and transmitted to you, by him, all that was recovered?”

“I received his packet, certainly ; but that it did not contain all that was lost, is sufficiently proved by your being here.”

I sullenly replied, that “I had no more to

say." For whether his implied conviction of my guilt were hypocritical or sincere, I could not reason upon such an hypothesis. But Harrison was not a man to be easily diverted from his object. He paced up and down the room for about a minute, and it allowed me, as well as himself, time to reflect.

"Have you seen Farquhar?"

"Not since he placed me here."

"He is still in Paris?"

"How can I tell, who am debarred all intercourse with the world?"

"True; I forgot that. But he is a witness against you, and must be here the day after to-morrow."

"No doubt you have arranged every thing." For I was well satisfied that Harrison himself was at the bottom of this persecution.

"I arrange it! I came here to seek this interview more for your good than for my own. Though the portrait is mine, I am no party to

these proceedings." And he said it ~~with~~ with such a natural air, that I believed him.

"Then what can be Farquhar's motive for them?"

Though the question was unpremeditated, and arose naturally out of his own disclaimer, I instantly perceived that it perplexed him. He accelerated his stride, looked out of the barred window, again resumed his pace, and, suddenly addressing me, said,

"Are you provided with counsel?"

I inferred that his real anxiety was founded on apprehension that my very inconvenient question might force an answer by professional skill, and I resolved not to remove his alarm.

"That is of little consequence to an innocent man. What can be Farquhar's motive, if *you* are no party to this prosecution?"

"He must answer for himself; I cannot judge of the motives of another."

“I shall learn it by his cross-examination.”

“Farquhar is an apostate, and unworthy of belief,” he replied, with less self-possession than I had ever witnessed in him; and I was thankful for the information which his momentary anger had conveyed. I followed up my inquiry.

“An apostate! What made him one?”

“I was wrong; I should have said ‘a convert’ to the true Church.”

“And therefore, no doubt, unworthy of credit! But what converted him?”

“I came to ask questions,—not to be catechised. Will you deliver up my papers?”

“And, if I had them to deliver, thereby acknowledge myself a thief! Really, Mr. Harrison, I thought you had more knowledge of the world.”

“Then, Sir, you may take my word for it, that Cecilia, and what you probably value more, liberty, is lost to you for ever.”

This denunciation had precisely the opposite effect to that which was designed,—for it gave me to understand, both that Cecilia was *not* yet lost to me for ever, and that ~~my~~ prosecution originated in selfish motives, the exposure of which would ensure my deliverance. I answered, almost with gaiety, “I will take my chance of that, Mr. Harrison.”

Finding himself foiled in every attempt, he was leaving the room abruptly; but I had gained spirit and courage by the information I had acquired, and I wished to make the most of my opportunity. In fact, it might never recur; and, though my present position was any thing but favourable for such an avowal, I resolved not to lose the occasion, unpropitious as it was, to effect the purpose for which I had left England. I intreated him to return, as I had an important communication to make.

“You will restore my papers?”

“We will not renew that controversy, Mr.

HARRISON. Few words will suffice for what I have to say ; but I may not again find a time to say them. I love Cecilia !”—and in the energy of the feeling with which I spoke, I sprung from the bed on which I had hitherto been lying.

Nothing checks natural impulse, or even frenzied passion, so decidedly as a cold, unimpassioned reception.

“Is that all? I have long been aware of that. I could not suppose you stole what you imagined to be her portrait, for the diamonds in which it was set.”

“I am grateful, at all events, that you acquit me of such a contemptible motive ; but I am careless on that head. I came to Paris to find you—to tell you that I love Cecilia—to declare it to Cecilia herself ; and now that I have discharged my duty to you, as her father, I tell you more : that by her own mouth alone will I be rejected.”

“ You shall soon be satisfied on that point, young man.”

And he left the room immediately ;—nor did I feel any inclination to detain him further.

CHAPTER XVI.

“ A sudden, bold, and unexpected question doth many times surprise a man, and lay him open.”

BACON'S ESSAYS.

EARLY the next day the surgeon paid me another visit, and saluted me with more of the respectful courtesy due to an equal than he had done at our former interview. I was impatient to hear his report.

“ Je n'ai pas appris de nouvelles de vos parens, si ce n'est qu'il y a trois semaines qu'ils sont partis pour Londres ; mais racontez-moi l'histoire de votre emprisonnement ; je viens

vous faire offre de services, autant qu'il m'est possible de vous en rendre."

He listened with attention to my story, so far as I thought expedient to communicate it. For though I had no hesitation in explaining all that had occurred respecting the affray at the restaurateur's and the accusation of theft to which it had led, I was not sufficiently assured of the extent of his connexion with Harrison, to repose entire confidence in him. I therefore contented myself with saying, that the second charge against me was for stealing a lady's portrait, but I believed that it originated only in the jealousy of a rival.

"Ma foi, mon enfant, vous êtes un vert galant; je ne saurai vous aider là; mais quant à l'autre affaire, c'est une bagatelle, si le restaurateur en fera le même rapport; je le chercherai."

This was all I wanted, as I trusted that I should succeed in extracting enough from Far-

quhar to defeat his malice, or Mr. Harrison's,—for I was well convinced that they were both in league against me.

My kind doctor returned in less than an hour, with the gratifying intelligence that he had not only secured the attendance of the restaurateur, who well remembered the whole transaction, but also of Captain Franklin, the gigantic Englishman in whose cause I had suffered so severely. Nor was it long before my gallant countryman himself called; but admission was denied to him, as he could not claim the medical privilege.

It is a happy peculiarity, when we are so susceptible of excitement as to forget our serious griefs in the exhilaration produced by success in trifling matters. My spirits were so raised by the apparent certainty of being, acquitted on one charge, though the least important one, that I felt fully capable of making a triumphant defence on the other,

though accident alone could supply the means ; and even the anxiety under which my family must labour, in their ignorance of my fate, and the anxiety which, under other circumstances, I should also have felt myself as to Cecilia's,—scarcely once recurred to my mind, now that a few hours only intervened before, as I hoped, I should quit that horrible prison for ever, and with my character unsullied.

I made the best toilette that I could, under the circumstances, and presented myself to the *Cour d'Assises* with a cheerfulness and animation which, as I could perceive, greatly propitiated the Court itself, as well as the by-standers, in my favour. Fortunately for me, I was first arraigned on the charge of stealing the two napoleons. They were produced, and closely inspected by the restaurateur. This was the only moment of agitation that I felt throughout. If he should fail to identify them, or be dishonest enough to deny his recollection of them,

my disgrace was sealed. I watched him in awful suspense, as he turned them over and over,—took off his glasses, and cleaned, and then re-adjusted them,—as if seeking for some mark that he could not discover. My anxious feelings were visibly shared by others: for every body present was evidently observing the man, in a silence so still, that the breathing of a sleeping infant might have been heard.

“Nettoyez-les,” exclaimed a voice in the crowd.

“Je les reconnais, Monsieur, je les reconnais bien,” he said, after a moment’s pause; “mais il faut en rendre les preuves visibles.” And he began to rub the gold with the corner of his apron. “Les voilà, Monsieur, les voilà;” and, with infinite complacency, he handed up the coin to the presiding judge.

‘Je ne vois rien.’

“Prenez mes lunettes, Monsieur.”

“Lunettes—lunettes,” was repeated by so

many voices, that I felt how much all were prejudiced in my behalf; and their sympathy sustained me, till the judge himself, after minute scrutiny under the guidance of the witness, determined the point in my favour in a tone of much complacency.

“Il est vrai, je les vois bien, je m'en réjouis, les marques sont assez manifestes; mais, pourquoi les avez-vous faites?”

And the witness explained his motive by saying that his habit was to mark all the coin that he won at play, because he had been frequently paid in light money. He had won these napoleons from the French officer on the same morning that the affray occurred. My exculpation was complete; but Captain Franklin forced a way through the crowd, and requested to be allowed, in justice to me, to state what he knew of the matter. He wished to secure me triumph as well as acquittal. With imperturbable gravity he narrated the whole affair from beginning to

end; and when at length he concluded his description of the process of forcing the devilled morcel down the officer's throat, he extended his forefinger and thumb,

“Mettez vos lunettes, Monsieur; mettez vos lunettes, et vous en verrez les marques!” shewing the scars of certain wounds that his fingers had received from the officer's teeth. “Ou, si vous n'êtes pas content de ces preuves, je répéterai l'opération à l'instant, avec beaucoup de plaisir;” and he turned short round upon the unlucky officer with a smile of obliging promptitude that was irresistibly comic. He retreated, and I was acquitted amidst shouts of laughter and cheers. This merry sympathy denotes the most favourable of all popular tempers for a prisoner, whether guilty or innocent.

I was again arraigned on the second charge, before either the cheers or the laugh had subsided. Encouraging as they were to myself, they were not the less so that I could perceive

they blanched the cheek of Farquhar, notwithstanding the swaggering air with which vain men generally endeavour to cloak the awe with which they, for the first time, face a public audience. He recovered his self-possession sufficiently to give his evidence coherently and intelligibly. When he had brought it to a close, the portrait was produced, and its rich ornaments displayed, while he wound up his case with stating that I had avowed having purchased it for the paltry sum of ten shillings. I could observe, by their looks and whisperings, the change that was working in the fickle minds that within half an hour had congratulated me with cheers; and I began to tremble for the result. But the thought of Cecilia, awakened in all its absorbing interest by the sight of the portrait, restored me, and was assisted by a longing desire to revenge his injuries to me, by forcing the man to a self-degrading confession. I rushed directly to the point.

“Of what religion do you call yourself?”

“I belong to the true Church—the Church of Rome.”

“Were you educated in that Church?”

“No; you are aware that till recently I was a Protestant.”

“How came you to abandon your faith?”

“Reflection enlightened my conscience.”

“When did this happy change occur?”

He hesitated, and would have refused an answer, had not the judge insisted on one.

“I cannot exactly say; it may have been a year ago.”

“A year! why you were then at Cambridge, and daily attending a Protestant chapel. How can you reconcile this with an apostacy of twelve months’ date?”

“I had a dispensation!”

The word “dispensation” brought back Cyril and all his remorse, and with the thought a new idea flashed across my mind.

“How did you obtain this dispensation? Through what channel did you procure it?”

“And what,” appealing to the judge, “what has all this to do with the present matter? I accuse him of stealing, and he catechizes me on my religious creed!”

“Il faut répondre, Monsieur; il a droit de recuser votre serment.”

“Je pourrai l'appuyer par le témoignage des autres.”

“Fort bien; mais cependant il faut répondre.”

“Then,” he answered doggedly, “Mr. Harrison obtained the dispensation for me.”

“And did Mr. Harrison prompt you to this prosecution?”

“No; it was spontaneous. I wished him to recover his property.”

“How do you know it to be his?”

“When it fell from your neck on your being arrested, I picked it up, and immediately recognized the likeness of his wife.”

“Is Mr. Harrison one of the witnesses to whom you have alluded?”

“He is.”

“Is he here?”

“I believe he is.”

I had been allowed a chair, and I fell back in it with breathless agitation when I heard the judge require his immediate attendance; for I now saw that the plan was laid deeper than I had supposed, and that my chance of establishing my innocence, against the combined testimony of two such unscrupulous witnesses, was small indeed. While vainly endeavouring to assume at least an external composure, for I was conscious that all my hopes depended on my comporting myself as innocent, a conversational argument arose between the judge and a distinguished avocat who was present, in consequence of a suggestion from the latter, that as the evidence proved that the offence, if committed at all, had been committed in England, the Court had no jurisdiction. The judge

seemed to hold a different opinion, and to think that the robbery had been continuous, and was no less an offence by the subsequent detention of the property in France, than if it had been originally taken in Paris. The discussion lasted for an hour, during all which time the *huissier* had been in search of Harrison. At length the judge seemed to be so far brought round by the reasoning of the *avocat*, as to be satisfied that unless I waved the objection it ought to prevail. He explained it to me, and enquired if I repudiated his jurisdiction? I was too much excited at the moment to understand him, till he added that in that event I should be sent back to England for trial; when, with impassioned vehemence, I sprung from my chair, grasped the barrier before me with a convulsive energy that made it tremble, and exclaimed in a frenzied tone:

“Jamais, Messieurs—jamais—quelle que soit la suite de ce procès terrible, je connois mon innocence, je ne retournerai jamais dans mon pays

comme un homme dégradé ; et quant à vous, je suis sûr que vous ne me croyez pas coupable sur le serment d'un apostat !”

My answer, wild as was the passion that dictated it, had its full effect on a mob of sentiment—and how can a French mob be otherwise ? It was greeted, not with “murmurs of approbation,” such as the decorum of our own courts is wont to repress with becoming dignity, but with a loud tumultuous shout of applause, that “did homage,” to use their own phrase, to the feelings of “the patriot and the man !” Had I been charged with parricide, and on the clearest evidence, that shout determined that I should leave the court unscathed.

It was at this moment of ecstatic triumph, exulting in my position, though yet a prisoner, and glorying in the conviction that my innocence was spontaneously acknowledged—looking more like a conqueror flushed with victory than a miserable culprit waiting for the galleys,- that

a sudden bustle and confused struggle at the door, with loud and reiterated cries of “Gare ! gare !” announced the return of the *huissier*, accompanied, not by Mr. Harrison, but—by Cecilia !

My first impulse was to rush towards her, but I found myself still a prisoner, and I sank down again into my chair, ashamed and abashed : all my momentary exultation was gone—all my pride of triumph exchanged for sad humiliation ; I felt thoroughly abased and lost. It was needless to declare her name ; the picture had been handed about and seen by every eye ; the likeness was recognised in an instant. The president invited her to a seat near him, with an air of courtesy and consideration, and the eagerness of curiosity restored a silence in the audience, which no judicial frown could have commanded. Yet it is extraordinary, the occasional power of that frown ! at least when invested, as with us, in ermine.

I was once in court at Monmouth, when a yelping cur had intruded on its sacred purlieus, to the infinite annoyance of the late Mr. Justice Parke. His Lordship laid repeated injunctions of silence on the intruder, but finding them disobeyed, turned to the sheriff with a frown of indignation, "Sir, if I hear that dog again, I will fine *you* ten pounds," and the dog was heard no more ! To interpolate canine iniquity with French sentiment ! it is indeed treason, but the temptation was irresistible !

" Nous attendions votre père, Mademoiselle ; tenez-vous sa place ? "

" Quand l'huissier arriva, mon père n'était pas chez lui : on expliqua l'objet de sa visite, et je vins tout de suite, afin d'éclaircir la vérité. "

" Eh bien ! ce portrait-là ; à qui appartient-il ? "

" A moi ; c'est le portrait de ma mère. "

" Il vous ressemble beaucoup ; mais comment arrive-t-il que vous l'aviez perdu ? "

“Perdu ! je ne l’ai pas perdu : maintenant il appartient à ce Monsieur, à qui je le rends.”

And, extending it towards me with her hand, I received it with an emotion that no language can describe; nor was it in any degree diminished by the new cry that now arose. She had given her name when the oath was administered, and the court echoed with, “Henri et Cécile,”—“Cécile et Henri,” for it was very naturally set down as a love affair from beginning to end. But strange to say, I could not, after the first emotion was over, arrive so easily at the same conclusion, however well persuaded of my own feelings.

Cecilia had not shewn either agitation or discomposure. She came, as she said, to bring the truth to light, and she had conducted herself in a scene, novel and embarrassing, with true philosophic calmness and dignified propriety. There was no private glance of recognition or of sympathy ; no hysterical agitation ; nothing to

betray an atom of interest in the affair beyond the motive of simple justice to one who was wrongfully accused. Even the restoration of the picture was not, as I interpreted her manner, an act of sentiment, but a matter of course, in necessary keeping with her statement. In a word, she had given her evidence with the simplicity and unaffected manner of a sensible woman, who found herself compelled by a sense of duty to vindicate a person improperly accused, and who, having discharged her duty, felt no otherwise affected by the result.

Such were my reflections on thinking over the scene ; but I had no time to indulge in such reflections then, for, of course, my discharge was immediate, and immediately followed by warm salutation, and in some instances, cordial embraces, *à la française*, from the surrounding groups, though all unknown to me. Had not my mind been too much occupied with other thoughts, I might have fancied myself just

escaped from a political martyrdom to some favourite novelty of revolutionary principle. My whole anxiety however, at the moment, was to get round to Cecilia ; but, before I could comply with the usual forms, and extricate myself from the mass of congratulating, unwashed humanity that environed me, she had withdrawn from the court, without even a farewell look.

At last I reached the street, where I was again favoured with shouts of triumph from multitudes, who gloried so much in hearing their own charming voices, that they cared not why or wherefore they were raised. I was speculating which way I should direct my course to obtain rest and refreshment, without a shilling to pay for either, and with garments that neutralized all chance of credit, when Captain Franklin, whose curiosity had induced him to wait the event, took hold of my arm : " Come, with me, my fine fellow ; we will dine together at all events, and see what is to be done next,"

and he carried me away with him, with ready acquiescence on my part.

We had scarcely proceeded a hundred yards, when tumultuous shouts of mirth attracted our attention to a group of forty or fifty men, who seemed heartily engaged in some scene of practical fun. This was a temptation that Captain Franklin could not resist, and we hurried on to collect the cause, when to our surprise, we found that the unfortunate Farquhar had been recognised on his exit from the court, and, amidst cries of "*apostat*," "*renégat*," assaulted and rolled in the muddy kennel, with very serious threats of purifying him by ablution in the Seine. Franklin's way of "doing business" was very downright, and, regardless of numbers, he at once flew to the rescue; but I doubt if his gallantry would have saved either the victim or himself, had not I, being recognised by some of the mob, entreated them to let me take a more generous revenge.

They listened to me readily, and permitted us to carry off Farquhar in a hackney coach, which soon left behind the little urchins, who alone thought it worth while to follow us with their shrill cries of "*renégat—apostat,*" ignorant alike of their meaning, or to whom they applied.

CHAPTER XVII.

“Hollow church papists are like the roots of nettles ; which themselves sting not, but yet they bear all the stinging leaves.”

LORD BACON.

WE first drove to our friend, the *restaurateur*. Animal cravings will be heard, *malgré* sentiment, anxiety, or joy ; and, after the privations which I had undergone for a month, a good dinner was, I must with all humility confess, uppermost in my thoughts ; nor was the satisfaction of it much diminished by the necessity of including Farquhar in the party. The frankness and cordiality of Franklin had so won my confidence, that I

availed myself of the opportunity, while Farquhar had retired to relieve himself of some of the favours of the mob, to consult him as to my next step.

“How the deuce can I advise you, when, except as to-day’s affair, you are a total stranger to me?”

“I forgot that, and your kindness is the best excuse for forgetting it. But here I am, without a shilling, even to pay for my dinner, and the affair of to-day may have led you to suspect as much.”

“Oh, never mind that! If ten or twenty pounds will take you home, they are at your service. You can repay it to my agent.”

“A thousand thanks. I gratefully borrow them. But I don’t wish to return home till I have—” and I hesitated.

“Whew—ew—ew!” whistled the Captain. “I understand: till you have thanked the fair Cecilia, I suppose! Well, that is all correct

enough ; but you know your own affairs best. I cannot advise you, when I know nothing about them."

" Will you qualify yourself, by listening to them ?"

" With all my heart, if this mud-born eel will give us time, for I fancy that you will find him *de trop* in such a confidence."

" The rascal knows more of them than myself already, I fear, and for that very reason I want advice."

I was soon able to give Captain Franklin such an outline of my story as not only enabled him to advise me, but deeply interested him in my behalf. He sat ruminating on my narrative for some minutes, when we heard Farquhar approach.

" Not a word to him—not one word. I will keep him in view as long as he is in Paris. He can't escape me, rely on it ; but you must keep still. An old fox knows the huntsman's voice

as well as his own kennel: but he shall not dodge me. You remain here while I protect him home, and we will talk matters over."

And accordingly our dinner passed without a word of catechism on either side, and Franklin's offer to escort him to his hotel was thankfully accepted by Farquhar. In his position, I could scarcely have tasted salt so soon with one whom I had so deeply wronged; but sometimes it is a blessing to a vain man that he does not think as others do.

"Well," said Franklin as soon as he returned, "I have run him to earth; and now we shall soon discover his haunts, and of course, Miss Harrison's, for the *huissier* could never have found her without his help."

"But surely the *huissier* himself is my best guide?"

"Yes, if you could make sure of him. That is done already, depend on it."

And so it proved, for though I went in search

of him as soon as, by Franklin's assistance, I could provide a better dress, he either lied, or Harrison had so arranged matters as to render pursuit useless. His statement was that he had been directed to an hotel in the Rue Rivoli, and had inquired for Mr. Harrison and his daughter; that the name was unknown to the porter, but that on leaving the place, he had met the young lady entering, and, seeing that she was English, had asked her if she knew the name; that she interrogated him as to his object, and on hearing it, immediately accompanied him. I proceeded to this hotel, but could ascertain no more than that an English gentleman and lady had occupied a room for about an hour; that they came in a coach, without any luggage, and had left in a similar manner.

I found in Franklin a very judicious as well as kind friend. For two days, by aid of a French *valet de place*, in whom he could confide, he maintained a constant watch over Farquhar, and

ascertained that he had never once quitted his apartments since the day of my trial. Perhaps this was not to be wondered at, for the trial, with all its theatrical incidents, found its way into the papers, and Farquhar might find the inconvenience of this publicity yet greater than I did. By Franklin's advice therefore, I determined on an immediate return to England, leaving Farquhar under his surveillance.

On reaching London, I found all my family had gone into the country, there to hide themselves from the wearisome condolences of "friends," on the subject of my mysterious disappearance. I had written to them the day that I was set at liberty, and feeling sure that my letter would bring them instantly to London, I would not leave it lest we should unawares pass each other on the road. I availed myself of the interval to call on Lawrence. He was not at home, but I heard that he had long since returned, on receiving the news of his father's

illness ; but that the old man, though gradually recovering his accustomed health and strength, positively refused to admit him to his presence.

“ Perhaps ’tis best, Mr. Stanley,” said his wife, “ for goodness knows, anger is a stirring thing ; and now he is not allowed to eat his fill, ’tis all my wit can do to keep him quiet. He never used to be so quiet as after a good dinner, and that would be my medicine for him ; but I suppose the doctor knows best. Poor man ! I can’t think that it would hurt him to take as much as he likes—for he is grown very thin ; almost as thin as I am.”

If that were the case, it was clear that the doctor was right, and that he could well afford to live upon starvation for another month at least. I did not ask to see him, but contented myself with obtaining Edward’s address, and proceeded there. I found him actually engaged on the report of my trial in “ Galignani,” and

he started up to receive me as one recovered from the grave.

Poor fellow! if he was startled at my appearance, I was actually shocked by his. Age had prematurely stamped him as her own; but it was the age of sorrow and of sickness, not of years. His tall person seemed infirm, almost to decrepitude; his eyes were sunken and beamless; his cheeks hollow and pale, while the constant action of what the anatomists call the buccinator muscles, had marked his face with an habitual wrinkle. He noticed my astonishment with a melancholy smile.

“I know I am sadly changed. You look as if you dare not say how much; but I am not long enough for this world to be troubled about it.”

“What mean you, Lawrence? Does your doctor tell you so?”

“Doctor! I want no doctor, unless he can find medicine for a broken heart.”

“What *is* the matter then, my dear fellow?

A broken heart is a very rare complaint, unless caused by a wounded conscience."

"No, thank God! I still have peace of conscience, though I have lost a father—lost a mistress—and, unless I may still call you one, am left without a friend!"

"Your father is alive, and improving. Is it possible that Agnes can be gone, and I not know it?"

"My father has discarded me for ever; and Agnes follows suit."

"Come, come, no more of this at present. You shall tell me all after dinner, if you will give me some; or better still, come and dine with me."

He preferred being my host; but I prevailed on him to walk with me for half an hour while dinner was preparing, and the effort was productive of so much benefit, that I arrived at the conclusion that depression of mind, fostered by the idleness of solitude to which it is apt to

lead, was the root of all his indisposition. In Cyril's case, the same lowness of spirits had to contend with a feeble constitution, already exhausted by the excitement of a severe academical struggle, and he sank under it. Lawrence's bodily powers were naturally great, and his intellectual exercises by no means so severe as to tax his strength of body ; though, for the time, his lassitude and depression appeared greater than I had ever witnessed in Cyril. Hence I was satisfied that to draw out those secret workings of the mind which were then undermining his health, would be the best remedy, and this was easily managed by pressing on the many explanations which I had long been vainly seeking for a fair opportunity of obtaining. Our dinner was soon despatched.

“ It was partly in the hope of falling in with you, Lawrence, that we went to Paris. What became of you ? ”

“ I was not there for more than a few hours. ”

“But what made you leave Highgate so suddenly—and even before Agnes went away?”

“I went in search of her father, for the scene that I had with my governor the evening you dined there, left me no alternative but to bring matters to a point, one way or the other. I must tell you much before you can understand it. You remember my visiting Glen Cottage the second time; it was when you spent the long vacation with Cyril in Scotland. I went by express invitation, but not without courting it. Though you and Cecilia had done your best to turn me out on my first visit, (and I can forgive you for it *now*,) I made my way with Mr. Harrison, and on taking my leave on that occasion, a day or two after you, he pressed me to repeat my visit. I wrote to him, reminding him of this. He answered, in a tone that startled me a little, that he could not be insensible to the compliment conveyed to his family by my letter, and

that they would be too happy to receive me, if I felt equal to more serious undertakings than sketching ruins and killing birds. This raillery was a little ambiguous, and the allusion to his family appeared to point the meaning of it in a direction for which I own I was not quite prepared; but there was nothing sufficiently explicit to justify me in regarding it as more than a friendly acquiescence in my own proposal, and of course, I could retreat when I pleased. For some days after my arrival, every thing proceeded much as it had done before, except that I was thrown more among the ladies by the absence of you and Cyril. There were no symptoms of more "serious undertakings;"—but ten days under the same roof with Agnes were enough to qualify me for any that involved the blessing of her hand. On this calculation I suppose it was, that so much breathing time was allowed me. We rode, we walked, we talked, we sang together,

and had things been allowed their natural course, we might have been happy together now."

"And will be yet, Lawrence, never fear."

He shook his head in that peculiar manner by which a man intimates a doubt that his tongue is unwilling to express, and proceeded:

"Agnes herself would tell you otherwise. I have lost her by the very course which I thought ensured my winning her. Her father led me into his library one morning after breakfast, and introduced the subject with an abruptness foreign to his usual manner,—it completely threw me off my guard. He began without preface: 'You wish to marry Agnes;—are you aware that she belongs to the Church of Rome?' I was so staggered by his thus coming instantly to the point, that I could not determine whether it was more expedient to answer his question, or to question his premises. I remained silent. 'And yet more,' he continued: 'do you know

that she has from her birth been devoted to the cloister?’ If I remained silent still, it was literally from the stupefaction of horror! I stared at him wildly, as if under the fascinating ‘eye’ of a rattle-snake,—and as I stared, I shook and trembled. He could not but have observed the extreme emotion under which I was labouring; but he is not a man to sympathise with such feelings,—and that you too, will find, Stanley, if you have not discovered it already.”

“I have discovered long since, that he is a selfish, hard-hearted father, and a vindictive enemy; but I fear him not,”—though, while I made the empty boast, I walked up and down the room with rapid strides, to relieve the oppressive feelings with which I began to anticipate the rest of his narrative.

“It is well for you if you have penetrated his character before you have gone too far. It was not so with me. I was so maddened by passion,

that if he had bargained for my soul as the price of Agnes, and clothed the proposal with the cunning of his master, I fear I should have yielded. He must have observed, but he would not notice, my agitation; and his continued silence forced me to speak. Reproach was the natural tone of my first words.

“‘It was cruel, Sir, most cruel, to introduce—’ and as I hesitated for words, he anticipated my meaning.

“‘Is it the custom of the world to label young ladies as they do the tables at the club-houses, and mark them pre-engaged?’”

“The taunt restored my courage. I promptly answered, ‘It might perchance secure domestic peace if it were.’

“‘True,’ he said; ‘and that the peace of my fire-side may not be endangered, I have preferred seeking this interview, to the usual courteous hypocrisy of intimating ‘our painful regret, that the expected arrival of friends compels us to

require your bed-room !' But perhaps that would please you better ?'

" I had by this time recovered my self-possession ; and I told him, with a firmness which seemed to take him, in turn, by surprise, that, unless he had sought the interview for the common advantage of Agnes and myself, it was better for me not to stay for any further intimation, whether hypocritical or sincere.

" ' It is for your common advantage. And to prove that I say so advisedly, I invite you to prolong your stay ; I impose no restrictions upon you, beyond silence to Agnes on the subject of this conversation. The day after to-morrow I will resume it, if that injunction is observed.'

" I left the library, bowing with an air of coldness, that I might retain the advantage which I saw that I had gained by my seeming acquiescence in his alternative ; and my first design was to carry on this shew of alienation to the

whole family. Even the inference which I could not but draw from his renewed invitation, that the 'pre-engagement' of Agnes was not indissoluble, did not stagger this resolution. But I need scarcely tell you, Stanley, that when the lovely girl came running to me in the garden ten minutes after, her luxuriant tresses all streaming in the wind, to remind me that I had promised to prepare her palette for her,—my resolutions melted away like snow in summer.

“The remainder of that day, and the next, passed away as usual. But, punctual to his word, as soon as breakfast was removed on the following morning, Mr. Harrison reminded me that we had an engagement together; and I followed him again to his room, with the feelings of a criminal about to receive sentence.”

“On my word, Lawrence, I have no patience with you. Why not have carried her off at once?”

“You will be more astonished still, when I tell you that conscience alone deterred me.”

“Conscience ! conscience forbid you to save a pretty girl from a convent ! You don’t deserve her.”

“I do not indeed ; and she thinks so too,—but for a widely different reason, as you will find presently. There is something about this father of hers, Stanley, that I cannot make out. You know how plausible and gentle he is on all ordinary occasions ; you have often witnessed the insinuating, deferential manner in which he leads conversation, on topics where he has been enlightening our ignorance with all the skill of a master ;—yet, in his *têtes-à-tête* with me on this painful subject, he has disdained every circuitous approach to it, and opened with the decision of a man who has business to do, and is anxious to do it as speedily as possible ; but his manner was more mild than it had been on our first interview.

“ ‘I told you,’ he began, ‘that Agnes has been destined to the veil from her birth. It is not necessary to explain our reasons; they are paramount, or I would not put such a constraint on my paternal feelings. Yet there are conditions on which I can be released from my vow on her behalf—(I trembled as Lawrence uttered the word ‘conditions’)—and on no other terms shall she ever be the bride of man;—I would rather weave her shroud.’

“The air with which this was said, Stanley, was neither loud nor peremptory,—nor even severe. I can find but one term to convey it,—it was terrifically calm. I replied, ‘You can name no condition, Sir, that I will not fulfil; for I am sure that, as a man of honour, you will propose none with which I may not comply without dishonour.’

“ ‘Do you place honour before conscience at Cambridge?’ he retorted, with a smile in which irony seemed to prevail; and, without waiting

for my answer, he added, with marked emphasis, ‘Agnes shall never wed with a stranger to the true Church. You, Mr. Lawrence, are a heretic.’

“Stanley, I will be honest with you. I was *not* so alarmed at this declaration as you probably will think that conscience should have made me. And why should I have been so? I had never once troubled my head with theological discussion, or doctrinal divinity; nor had it ever entered my imagination, that, so long as both were Christians, it mattered whether husband and wife held the same faith on minor points. Still, I felt that it became me, if only to shew the value of the conversion, to hesitate before I made any such admission.

“He probably inferred that I was contemplating the possibility of Agnes being more pliable than himself, for he presently added, with the same stern earnestness as before, ‘Be assured that my daughter never *will* give her hand to a heretic.’

“ ‘And is not that a point on which you will consult herself?’

“ ‘No, Sir ; nor will you either. Your final answer must be given before you meet again.’

“ ‘And is it possible,’ I rejoined, ‘~~that~~ you can expect a man to change his faith within a short half-hour?’—His answer shewed the decided character of the man :

“ ‘That is provided for ; she has already left the house with her mother, on a distant visit. She will not return here for a fortnight.’

“ ‘I was indeed astounded ; and an idea occurred to me, that I ought to have at once repudiated as high treason to Agnes. I saw that a trap had been laid for me, and I suspected she had been a party in preparing it : had it not been for this unjust suspicion, I might perhaps have averted all my subsequent sufferings—fool that I was !’

And he paused in his narrative for some minutes. I would not break the silence, for I

was at no loss to see that there was more at his heart than the pang of disappointed love. Acute as that is, it usually is pain of brief duration; but wearing, enduring, soul-harrowing, tearless sorrow, is rarely unmingled with remorse. In a few minutes he resumed his story in a manner that verified my suspicions.

“My kind father had indeed no wish nearer his heart than to see me married. It would have cheered his declining days; and I, his only child, am a renegade in his opinion—a parricide in my own! He wished me to marry one or another in his own circle of trade and vulgarity. He forgot that he had bestowed on me an education that induced a higher taste; and he resented the very idea of my bringing a stranger into his house! My mother thought—and how could I differ from her?—that it was only necessary to see Agnes and to love her; yet that unhappy step has made me my father’s murderer!”

Had he wept,—had he even spoken with passion,—I should have been able to render comfort; but he was obviously dwelling upon an idea which he had long been cherishing, with morbid, not salutary penitence. It required tact to dispel the illusion, and I felt that common consolation would be misplaced. I contented myself with reminding him that his father was not only yet alive, but recovering; and that his own immediate and first duty was to check feelings that would incapacitate him for a reconciliation, which could not be far distant.

“You do not know my father, Stanley. Under that homely appearance, he wears a heart as resolute and decided, as it is kind. He might forgive me,—he might receive Agnes, were it possible she could now be mine; but my apostasy he never can forgive; and, unforgiven by him, where can I hope for peace? The grave itself will have no rest for *me*,—a second Cain! His mark is on my brow!”

And he turned away from me with a look of horror and agony. His eyes, hitherto dull and inanimate, became fixed and staring,—the upper lids being retracted by convulsive spasm, so as to expose the whole circle of the irides to view; his teeth were set as if by tetanus; and his clenched hands grasped the two arms of the chair in which he was sitting, with a gripe of preternatural strength, while he still muttered “Cain—Cain—Cain.”

In my alarm at the state in which I saw him,—every muscle of his countenance writhing with nervous and involuntary action, more awfully distressing because he made the strongest efforts to regain composure, but in vain;—I wanted to force upon him a glass of wine, but he pushed it away in frenzy, “Not that—not that;” and pointed to a phial on the mantelpiece which contained laudanum. I began to drop it into a glass; but he snatched the phial from me, with a sudden effort that relaxed the

rigidity of his spasm, poured out nearly sufficient to half fill a wine-glass, and drank it off with eagerness, ere I could arrest his hand.

“You need not fear; I am used to it,” he said immediately; and, for the moment, I felt re-assured by the explanation which this sad confession gave of his haggard and death-like appearance. I entreated him to defer the conclusion of his tale; but he shortly became comparatively calm, and as much himself as probably he had been since his rupture with his father.

“I shall be well for four-and-twenty hours now,” he said; “and if any thing can do me real good, it will be to open my heart entirely, while I am about it.”

The remainder however, was told with such frequent intervals, and so incoherently, that I will not attempt to repeat it in his own words; in fact, it was not without considerable difficulty that I succeeded in extracting from him a con-

nected and intelligible statement, for he reverted to home at every pause,—almost at every sentence. Perhaps it was not madness; but long may it be before I again witness such morbid wandering of the mind!

Lawrence spent the fortnight of deliberation at Glen Cottage in reading such controversial books as Mr. Harrison put into his hands, and in listening to his comments upon them; nor did it appear that, in his new capacity of tutor in divinity, Harrison took any unfair advantage of him,—beyond imbuing with subtleties and sophistries, a mind but too well prepared by circumstances to receive them, and too superficially informed to detect their fallacy. Lawrence acknowledged that his manner was even paternally affectionate; so that he seemed to be really more solicitous to save a soul, than to secure a convert. Had he provoked discussion, he might, with all his ingenuity, have proved less successful. As it was, he gained over his

pupil more by the romance than the logic of his subject; and so skilfully and so imperceptibly that, when he began to meditate seriously for himself, Lawrence came to the conclusion that he had been a Papist all his life without knowing it; that there was no essential and irreconcilable difference between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, except that the devotion of the former was less sincere, its piety less practical, its forms less solemn and becoming, and its repudiation of infallibility opposed to the holiness of their common Apostolic origin and therefore heretical: conversion, truly, is a simple process with superficial minds. Give me a youth with a tincture of sentiment; a common-place conscience, more curious than compunctious; a good musical ear; a small smattering of the divinity of the schools, but a fair portion of the conceit that glories in notoriety, and cannot attain unto it: I will undertake to make a proselyte of him in an hour.—

or even half the time, if he has a further premium in view in the form of a pretty girl, or a good fortune! For conversion does not necessarily involve either celibacy or poverty.

On the expiration of the fortnight, Lawrence's novitiate had terminated, to the entire satisfaction of his instructor. He avowed his penitential adherence to the true faith, and his readiness to make a public profession of it whenever required. But this by no means corresponded with Mr. Harrison's views. He actually prohibited, not only his public profession, but all private confession of the change—even to Agnes herself! What cannot a man obtain, who has the power of controlling a lover's destiny? Lawrence acceded to every thing; and, in return, was permitted to resume his intimacy with Agnes, though not avowedly as her acknowledged suitor. Such was their position on his return to Cambridge, when he changed his gown to exempt himself from chapel attendance.

But there was a second "condition" which Harrison would not as yet explain to the neophyte : " It was quite a matter of secondary importance, and might be conveniently deferred." Lawrence, with all his facility, was wanting neither in honour nor in conscience ; and, while he felt bound to observe his promise to maintain secrecy for the present, he also considered it his duty to avoid all compliance with the forms of the English Church, as far as it was possible ; and even to vindicate the pretensions of the Church of Rome, when they chanced to become the topic of conversation. His father was one of those straightforward John Bulls, of whom we saw daily specimens in the times when " No Popery " was a frequent cry ; one who honestly believed that the oath of abjuration meant no more than that " God save the King and d—n the Pope ", were inseparably united. The anathema and the blessing were so blended together in his imagination, that it might be doubted if he

could by any possibility have uttered the one without the other. It could not be otherwise than that collision would arise, between his opinions and those now adopted by his son; nor could the latter, however cautious, steer with dexterity the very difficult path between filial reverence and religious constancy. The first required him to defer to a father's prejudices; the last, to vindicate the faith which he professed. He wished to do his duty; but conscience could be satisfied neither way.

Nor was this his only trouble. Agnes and he had long since understood each other; nor is it necessary to define exactly the steps by which this mutual understanding had been attained. The method, in such cases, varies wonderfully. Sometimes a single look is sufficient; indeed, this is, I believe, the most common course. It is not easy to describe such looks. Sometimes they incline this way; sometimes the other. In one case it is plaintive: in another, merry. There

is the look of frankness, and the look mysterious ; now it is lighted up with surprise, and now it glances reproach. Whatever is its appropriate, distinctive epithet, there is no doubt that a single look, provided it be a look of mutual intelligence, does the business most effectually, and as often as any other formula in the laboratory of love.

However this may be, it was the fact, that, by some means or other, Lawrence and Agnes understood each other perfectly ; so perfectly, that the only question was,—*when* ? But in all properly-appointed alliances, this is a question in which the parties directly interested are not the principals, unless they are blest with independence of age or fortune. Sometimes they are too young, yet oftener too poor ; and the higher powers must be consulted. This was precisely the point at which Agnes and Lawrence had arrived, when the latter accompanied Farquhar to the Glen, to explain the catastrophe of the

tandemized desk. Mr. Harrison had received them with his usual courtesy and urbanity, and listened to their narrative with good-humoured facility; though he expressed his fears that some papers had been lost by the unfortunate accident. Such was the comity of his manner, and the cordiality of their reception, that Lawrence was emboldened to press for an explanation of the further "condition" on which the hand of Agnes was contingent. He at length obtained it; and well might he be horror-struck by the communication:—"He must take orders in the Church of England!!!"

Lawrence, after this communication, only remained at the Glen long enough to obviate the suspicion that he contemplated any breach of the engagements he had already made, and found an opportunity of apprising Agnes of the terms her father had imposed; but without telling her of the extent to which he had already complied. To his surprise, she encouraged him

in resistance. On her father's way through town, Mrs. Lawrence, at her son's instance, called upon them at their hotel, and invited Agnes to spend a day at Highgate. What then occurred has been already narrated.

With the impetuosity of an angry and disappointed man, young Lawrence resolved to seek an immediate interview with Harrison, and followed him to the continent. He overtook him at Marseilles, resolute to force an explicit avowal of all his ulterior purposes, or to repudiate entirely the second condition of the alliance. But Harrison was inexorable; and his courage failed. He returned to Paris, where the news of his father's illness met him. He hurried on to London, only to be refused an interview by his still indignant parent. He wrote to Agnes, fully acknowledging what he had before concealed from her,—that he had yielded to her father's terms; and his letter was returned with the chilling answer:

“An apostate from his Church can never be faithful to a woman, and shall never have the hand of

“AGNES.”

END OF VOL. I.

